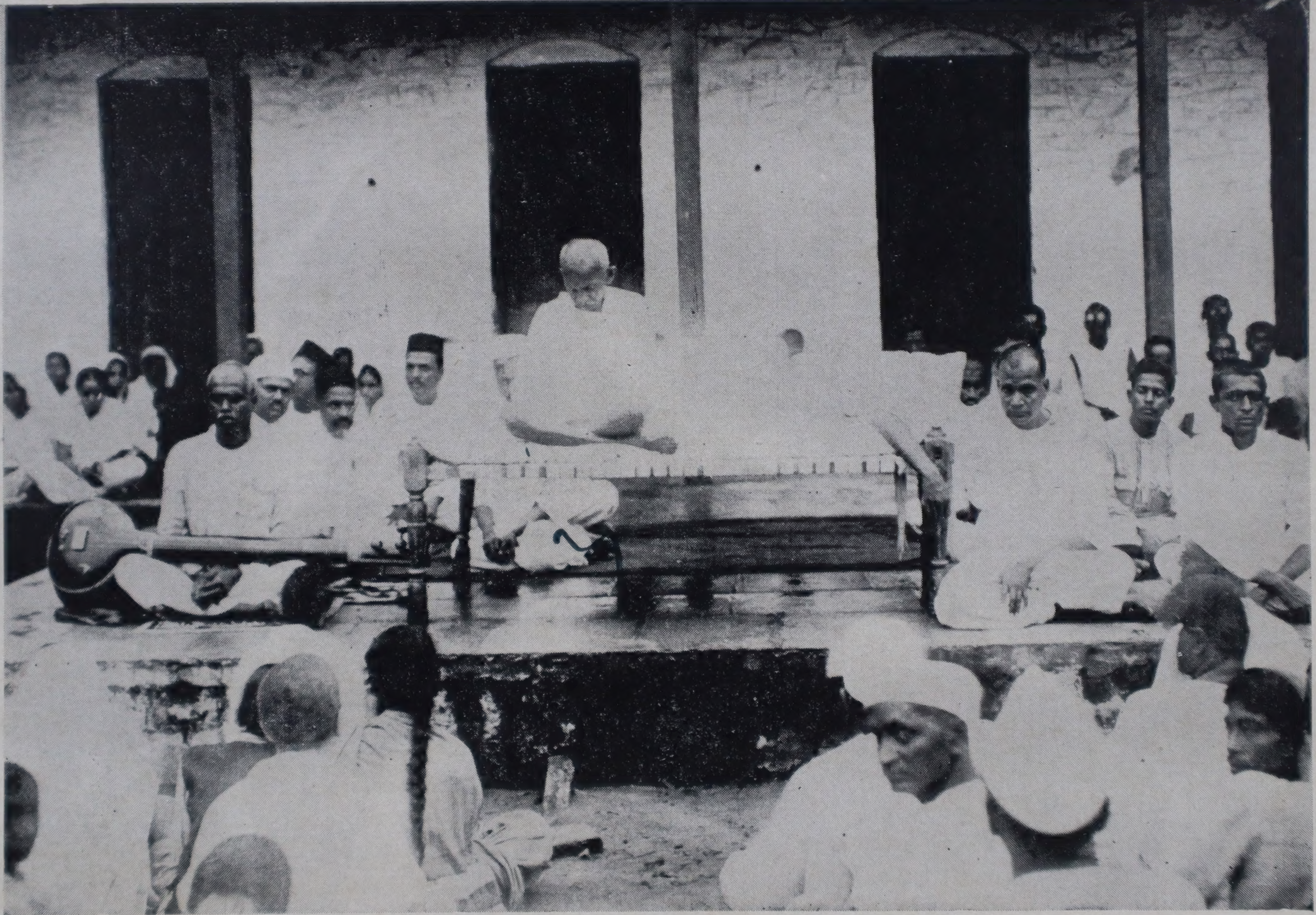
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Sep. 1933 – Jan 1934

THE COLLECTED WORKS OF MAHATMA GANDHI

LVI

(September 16, 1933–January 15, 1934)



AT THE MEETING DISCUSSING SURRENDER OF THE ASHRAM (p. 65)

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(September 16, 1933 – January 15, 1934)

सत्यमेव जयते

THE PUBLICATIONS DIVISION
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PREFACE

During the four months (September 16, 1933 to January 15, 1934) covered in this volume, Gandhiji was technically a free man, as he had been unconditionally released on August 23rd. But he considered himself virtually a prisoner during the unexpired portion of the one-year sentence awarded to him on August 4, 1933 and scrupulously refrained from political activities or the furtherance of civil disobedience, while exercising the fullest freedom in conducting his campaign against untouchability and guiding constructive activities in the Ashram and elsewhere. Government and even his political associates could hardly understand his inner compulsion to carry on the struggle against untouchability, which was based on the firm conviction that, in the sense in which slavery was abolished in 1833, untouchability had been abolished in September 1932 at the representative meeting of Hindus in Bombay under the chairmanship of Pandit Malaviyaji and that "one life is being definitely held as hostage for the due fulfilment of the solemn pledge of the Hindus" (p. 89).

This combination of self-imposed discipline and vigorous activity naturally led to a great deal of misunderstanding on the part of both followers and critics. As the leader of the Congress Party he had given a power of attorney to Nehru (p. 382). About A.I.C.C. work, for example, he referred Nariman to Jawaharlal, "my political chief", confessing to the latter, "I stand thoroughly discredited as a religious maniac and predominantly a social worker" (p. 167). Charged with using the Harijan movement to strengthen civil disobedience and also of abandoning civil disobedience for the sake of the Harijan movement, he could only say: " . . . I am between two crossfires. Congressmen accuse me of having damaged the cause of civil disobedience by taking up this whirlwind campaign. Those who suspect me of ulterior motives accuse me of strengthening civil disobedience. . . . It is a peremptory religious call which I am obeying" (p. 346).

Even his absence from the funeral of Vithalbhai Patel was misinterpreted. He pleaded with Mathuradas Trikumji not to put pressure on him to light the funeral pyre: "I can take no interest in the outside activities; mentally I am in jail. I will somehow go through the Harijan tour. I hardly even think about other things" (p. 161). He had again to explain to Manibehn Patel how he was "out of prison only for the sake of Harijans" and

this he said "not only for the benefit of the Government or the world but because that is how I really feel in my heart" (p. 225). Unable to offer civil disobedience, he was "like a bird who had lost its wings" (p. 229). He explained further in a letter to Gordhanbhai Patel, "My differences with Vithalbhai had absolutely nothing to do with my not going there. My present circumstances were the sole reason behind my not going over" (p. 256).

Under a similar inhibition he refused to oblige English friends by roundly condemning the terrorists, an "unorganized, insane and wholly ineffective" party of violence (pp. 84-5), since he could do nothing to control the counter-terrorism of the Government which, according to him, was "much more mischievous in its effect, because it is organized and corrupts a whole people" (p. 34).

The fast had left him very weak and he had to obey the doctors' orders to take rest for six weeks after the crisis of August 23rd. He began however on November 7th his "whirlwind" tour in the Harijan cause which covered Central India, Andhradesha, Tamil Nadu, Mysore and Kerala and which was interrupted by a brief visit to Delhi in December for attending a meeting of the Central Board of the Harijan Sevak Sangh and for discussions with Congress leaders like Jawaharlal Nehru, Abul Kalam Azad and Acharya Kripalani.

Unveiling in Ahmedabad a statue of Sir Chinubhai Madhavlal, Baronet, Gandhiji expressed his cherished hope that "in our country there should be no ill will, no conflict, between the rich and the poor, that both may realize their own dharma and adhere to it" (p.12). It was this same anxiety to avoid conflict and to remind people of their duties rather than their rights that guided his activities and utterances in the Harijan cause. He intended to serve at one and the same time the reformers, the sanatanists and the Harijans (p.145). While he exhorted the Harijan workers to be "incorruptible and selfless" and pointed to caste Hindus their duty to rid themselves of the curse of untouchability, he was equally clear that ultimately the salvation of Harijans would have to come from within (p. 1).

Far from antagonizing any group, he took pains to identify himself with all the classes involved—the orthodox, the reformers, the Harijans and the common people. In dealing with the sanatanists, even with persistent trouble-makers like Pandit Lalnath, he never lost patience or betrayed intolerance. While the genuine popular support for reform was amply proved by the huge enthusiastic crowds and plentiful collections at his innumerable meetings, his sole endeavour was to win the orthodox opponents

over "by gentlest persuasion, by appealing to their reason and to their hearts" (p. 197). And even the diehard pandits, who, enraged by his obvious success, flung all sorts of abuses at him, could hardly resist his appeal to what they as well as the common people valued most highly, if only as a theory, the central message of the Upanishads and the *Ramayana* "that God alone is and no one else and nothing else" (p. 408). Indeed he claimed with justice to have removed much misunderstanding by friendly discussion and to have converted opponents into supporters with the earnest plea: "I have no weapon with me except the one of an appeal to the reason and heart of the people. The reform that I am advocating can only come through a change of heart on the part of millions of Hindus" (p. 474).

"I believe myself to be both a sanatanist and a reformer," he said. "I have tried to gather in me all the goodwill which caste Hindus can have towards Harijans. . . . I am also trying . . . to see with Harijans' eyes and to realize what is going on in their hearts" (p. 216). Whether it was economic progress or social reform, his whole philosophy was "saturated with the Harijan mentality" and he could only think in terms of the millions of villagers, making his happiness dependent upon that of the poorest among them and wanting to live only if they could live (p. 147). He warned the aristocratic students of Rajkumar College, " . . . all your education will be vain if you do not learn the art of feeling one with the poorest in the land" (p. 290). Having lived, eaten and drunk with the labouring poor, he had become a convinced prohibitionist and declared, "I am not a temperance man. I am a prohibition man" (p. 449).

In the movement for purification the Harijans themselves had "to play an honourable and valuable part" (p. 389). To the workers in the cause of reform his advice was to depend less on argument and more on purity and strength of character. He told them bluntly, " . . . if you had no character to achieve or lose, naturally people are not going to put any faith whatsoever in you. You have got to move the masses. You have got to change the hearts of the masses . . . . Masses will not argue." They will listen to leaders who have credentials (p. 362). He reminded students in Madras that by serving Harijans they would be bringing about a double revolution, one in the Harijans' lives and another in their own (p. 363).

Such was his faith in the oneness of truth and in the all-encompassing power of any truth when firmly held and lived by, that the abolition of untouchability, he believed would lead to the

end of all quarrels between classes and communities in India, the differences between Hindus and Mussalmans and between capital and labour (p. 300). The movement for the removal of untouchability was essentially religious and humanitarian and must therefore have repercussions on all other aspects of life, for religion governed all departments of life (p. 383). Thus though the reform had no political motives behind it, it would certainly have political consequences. "A duty religiously performed", he said, "carries with it many other important consequences. 'Seek ye first the Kingdom of God and everything else will be added unto you' is to my mind a scientific truth" (p. 325). And he declared at a public meeting in Nagpur that his whole life was governed by religion. Even his politics were derived from his religion (p. 205).

He was clear, however, that his Hinduism, like his nationalism, was "not exclusive or inconsistent with the interest of any portion of humanity" (p. 330). Indeed, through his work for Harijans he was trying to serve all communities. "They are branches of one big family. I have found in the Hindu branch a disease which, if not removed in time, will spread through the whole family and destroy it" (p. 282). Every religion, according to him, had to be nourished and sustained by the continuing *tapas* of its votaries (p. 62). All scriptures pronounce from the housetops "that religion can only be defended by *tapascharya*" (p. 466). Speaking in Calicut about "this black spot of untouchability" and recalling Bishop Heber's line, "only man is vile", he warns his co-religionists that even Hinduism cannot "escape the impending doom, if we, Hindus, prove unworthy representatives of the priceless treasures that the *rishis* have left for us" (pp. 490-1).

He had learnt to search for truth not in books, but in human hearts, in concrete situations, and he had also learnt to recognize it as it could be seen in human hearts and to respect the freedom of everyone. "No one," he said, "has a right to coerce others to act according to his own view of truth" (p. 216). He wanted complete freedom of thought and action for women (p. 439). His message to the women members of the Ashram was: "Irrespective of the resolution or promise made or given at the time of the march to Ras, let all the women think again independently and take a fresh decision. . . . Nobody should persuade anybody else to adopt a particular course. Everyone should decide for herself. It is their religious duty to do so. Each should act according to her capacity and her inclination. It is an accident that I am out of prison" (p. 495). In the same spirit he wrote to Manilal and Sushila Gandhi: "I shall not live for ever. You should

try to swim with your own strength. That is the right thing to do. . . . Instead of seeking the protection of an imperfect father, seek that of the Father of all, of Omnipotent God. That will make you strong. This is the only lesson I wish to teach you" (pp. 218-9). After having clearly stated for the benefit of a foreign disciple his views on inter-marriages between persons of different religions or cultures, he adds the caution, " . . . I would not be guilty of enslaving your reason or your heart. Imperfect as I am, I would not have you to become a partner in my errors" (p. 236). It was this sense of liability to error and of identity with all mankind, sinners as well as saints, which made Ramanama for him the most effective remedy both for divisive pride and weakness of will in well-doing. The Name, he said, "is not for the blameless and the healthy, but for people like us who are sinful and full of disease" (p. 37). How humility is essential for spiritual progress, he explains in a talk to votaries who should "be humble and live as particles of dust, be ciphers" (p. 67).

His detachment from political moves and anxiety to encourage freedom in others comes out frequently in his correspondence. He writes to Jawaharlal Nehru that it will do no good to have an A.I.C.C. meeting, "but," he adds, "that does not mean that it will deeply hurt me if such a meeting was held" (p. 30). Writing to Malaviyaji he deprecates the convening of A.I.C.C. meetings which end in desultory discussion and ill-thought-out resolutions (p. 96). He was all for a definite policy and a programme to be prosecuted unflinchingly. He felt that "hopeless inactivity is the worst of all and should be discountenanced" (p. 168). Recognizing therefore that the formation of a Swaraj Party had become necessary to ensure the political survival of those Congressmen who would not or could not take part in the civil disobedience movement, he wrote to K. M. Munshi: "Just as you thought it proper to consult me, I would advise you to consult Jawaharlal too" (p. 459). He hinted to Jawaharlal that his attacks on the Hindu Sabha "might have been less fierce" (p. 291). He wrote to G. D. Birla approving of his article on Jawaharlal, who "is a very straightforward man and corrects his error. . . . ultimately he is bound to follow the path of Truth" (p. 104).

In a letter to Prabhavati he lays it down that "Jayaprakash can remain in the present fight only if he is thus prepared to embrace poverty. This is a soldier's dharma." The other dharma, that towards one's family, "is in conflict with the good of society as a whole" when "it becomes an absolute dharma". This is

a conflict which is unavoidable today. "It is the aim of satyagraha to remedy this situation. But anybody who does not understand satyagraha and still follows it fails in both dharmas . . ." (p. 266.) In a well-ordered society a good citizen should not be called upon to make radical sacrifices, but where such sacrifices are demanded by unsettled conditions no one can offer satyagraha while still discharging responsibilities to his family. This is made clear in a further letter: ". . . it was not morally wrong to do one's duty towards one's own family, but . . . if one wished to follow the path of service, one must renounce such private duties" (p. 323). The same lesson is repeated to Jawaharlal Nehru: "In the final heat only those will be able to stand who have no property and nowhere to rest their heads on" (p. 291).

Convinced that "man is an animal created to discover his *atman*, and as *atman* all men are one" (p. 48) and that the final goal of all religions is to realize the essential oneness of the spirit which pervades all lives and appears in many forms (p. 305), he would use the doctrine of rebirth as an incentive to individual moral effort towards a better future for all mankind, not as a means of pusillanimous escape from the call of dharma. The argument about rebirth should be applied to oneself only. To be indifferent to the sufferings of others and "to tell them to 'pay for the sins' of their previous birth is to turn God . . . into a demon" (p. 248). After fifty years devoted to finding out what the law of karma should be, he had come to the conclusion that "to apply it to everybody else but ourselves is to distort it altogether; . . . If we were to apply the law of karma . . . towards ourselves, you would find the land here and elsewhere transformed" (p. 472).

Gandhiji, while a prisoner in Yeravda jail in 1932, had selected 42 verses from the *Bhagavad Gita* for Ramdas, his son and fellow-prisoner. To this he gave the title *Gita Praveshika*. Ramdas liked these simple and devotional verses and others felt it would prove helpful to Harijan workers and should be published. Before deciding if the collection was worthy of publication, Gandhiji consulted Vinoba, Kakasaheb and Balkrishna Bhave, who were all in prison at the time and who were all devoted students of the *Gita*. These three inmates of the Ashram held a consultation among themselves and advised Gandhiji, with a view to increasing its utility, to omit three of the verses and to add four new ones. The collection thus revised was presented to men and women workers as well as to other lovers of the *Gita* as

an introduction or *Praveshika*. But Gandhiji added the warning: ". . . merely memorizing or knowing the meaning of the *Praveshika* or [even] the whole of the *Gita* is not going to help realize the *atman*. The *Gita* is to be put into practice" (p. 74). It is simple *bhakti* and *shraddha* in service that he stresses again in the charming discourses on the *Gita* which he wrote to Kasturba (pp. 398, 417).

Acknowledging his lack of scholarship in Sanskrit, he wrote to Mahadev Desai: "You should go on with your translation taking such help as my translations can give to bring out my thought but not always following my translation. . . . Ignore the notes where they are useless. Give your own where they are necessary. . . . Re-write and add notes where necessary. . . . Then when the whole result comes into my hands, I shall work on it and make such changes as I may deem fit in order to bring out my meaning. . . . We must then bring out a revised version of the Gujarati and publish your translation in English" (p. 265). It was this English translation which was published in 1946 under the title *The Gospel of Selfless Action* or *The Gita According to Gandhi*.

NOTE TO THE READER

In reproducing English material, every endeavour has been made to adhere strictly to the original. Obvious typographical errors have been corrected and words abbreviated in the text generally spelt out. Variant spellings of names have, however, been retained as in the original.

Matter in square brackets has been supplied by the Editors. Quoted passages, where these are in English, have been set up in small type and printed with an indent. Indirect reports of speeches and interviews, as also passages which are not by Gandhiji, have been set up in small type. In reports of speeches and interviews slight changes and omissions, where necessary, have been made in passages not attributed to Gandhiji.

While translating from Gujarati and Hindi, efforts have been made to achieve fidelity and also readability in English. Where English translations are available, they have been used with such changes as were necessary to bring them into conformity with the original.

The date of an item has been indicated at the top right-hand corner; if the original is undated, the inferred date is supplied within square brackets, the reasons being given where necessary. The date given at the end of an item alongside the source is that of publication. The writings are placed under the date of publication, except where they carry a date-line or where the date of writing has special significance and is ascertainable.

References to Volume I of this series are to the January 1969 edition.

In the source-line, the symbol S. N. stands for documents available in the Sabarmati Sangrahalaya, Ahmedabad; G. N. refers to documents and M. M. U. to the reels of the Mobile Microfilm Unit available in the Gandhi Smarak Nidhi and Sangrahalaya, New Delhi; C. W. denotes documents secured by the Collected Works of Mahatma Gandhi.

The Appendices provide background material relevant to the text. A list of sources and a chronology for the period covered by the volume are also provided at the end.

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For research and reference facilities, we owe thanks to the Research and Reference Division of the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting, National Archives of India, and Shri Pyarelal Nayyar, New Delhi; and for assistance in photo-printing documents, to the Photo Division of the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting, New Delhi.

CONTENTS

1. SOME QUESTIONS

I have several letters from Harijans, lying in my file, putting a number of questions. I take up the most important. Before answering them, I would like to warn correspondents against putting questions for the sake of putting them, or, what is worse, of advertising themselves. I would beseech them to avoid the vices or shortcomings of the so-called superior classes or the so-called caste Hindus. I would like the yet very few Harijan workers to be above board, incorruptible and selfless, for they have to shoulder a tremendous burden. Whilst, as I have repeatedly said in these columns, it is the duty of caste Hindus to rid themselves of the curse of untouchability, ultimately the salvation of Harijans will have to come from within. In pursuance of the advice tendered by me, I withhold the names of my correspondents in anticipation of their approval of my action.

The first question I pick up is as follows:

> Generally social work is being done in town areas, but practically nothing is being done in the villages, though the latter are admittedly more in need. What is to be done?

I am afraid that what the correspondent says is very largely true. Unfortunately, workers are very few compared to the magnitude of the task before the reformer, and, the majority of workers being town-bred, they are disinclined to go to the villages and settle there. The Central Board[1] is quite alive to the problem, and effort is being made to penetrate the villages, not without some success. The answer, therefore, to the question, 'what is to be done', is that the effort has to be intensified. Village workers have to be found or made and, when once the fear of settling in villages is overcome, the response to the demand for a large number of workers will be much greater than it is today. Given continuance of the effort, success is bound to attend it.

The second question is:

> Will it not hasten the removal of untouchability if caste Hindus took Harijans as domestic servants?

This is no new advice. Swami Shraddhanandji used to lay very great emphasis on the necessity of caste Hindus employing

[1] Of the Harijan Sevak Sangh

Harijans as domestic servants precisely on the same terms as any other. But I fear that receiving Harijans as domestic servants will be, when it becomes at all general, not a spur to the removal of untouchability, but a sign of removal. Nevertheless, it is the duty of every reformer who has got rid of untouchability from his own household to have a Harijan domestic servant. No doubt, for the reformer it would be better still if he would take a Harijan boy or girl, not as a servant, but as a member of his family.

The third question is:

> What should Harijans do in the present drive against untouchability?

I can only repeat the answer I have given so often before. They should carry on vigorous internal reform among themselves and remove every cause of reproach.

The fourth question is:

> In two villages of Kaira, Harijans have been boycotted by caste Hindus because they asked for adequate remuneration for carrying carcasses. What should the Harijans do in such cases?

I am happy to be able to say that in one of these villages, owing to the efforts of workers of the local Society, the boycott was lifted, and the information as to the other village, at the time of writing this, is that there is every probability of a similar amicable settlement. But assuming that in some villages caste Hindus remain obstinate and persist in boycotting Harijans, if the latter have any self-consciousness they would persist in their refusal to render service without adequate remuneration, and, if the boycott proves to be too hot for them, they would quietly vacate the offending village. I know that this is easier said than done. And I know also that there is not sufficient awakening among the Harijans to induce them to adopt the method suggested by me. But I have also no doubt that the time is coming soon when caste Hindus will have to think a hundred times before resorting to such boycotts.

The fifth question is:

> What has come out of your proposal that there should be an all-India advisory board of Harijans to advise the Servants of Untouchables Society?

The proposal referred to was made by me in Ahmedabad. It had reference to the Provincial Board, but what is true of the Provincial Board is also true of the Central Board. It should be remembered that the advice was given to the Harijans and it is

for them to make a move and appoint such committees. I have no doubt that the Central Board and the Provincial organizations will function in a proper manner. Much good can be done through them.

The sixth question is:

> Do you know that some temples which had been opened to Harijans were subsequently closed against them? What is your solution?

For the time being, we have to assume that such temples were opened under some sort of coercion or that the trustees have been since coerced into closing them against Harijans. I know one or two instances of the latter kind. My solution in either case is that for the time being we should suffer this deprivation.

The seventh question is:

> The temple-entry movement seems to have come to a dead stop. Do you contemplate any move?

I do not think that the temple-entry movement has suffered any such stop as the correspondent suggests. The spectacular part of it is, no doubt, under check, but the effort for opening new temples and re-opening old temples is steadily going forward, as the pages of the *Harijan* can show.

The eighth question is:

> Will you be a party to a modification of the Yeravda Pact, if all the parties to it come to a common understanding?

Naturally the Pact would be modified, but, so far as I am concerned, it can never be modified to the detriment of Harijans.

The ninth question is:

> Neither the Bombay Government nor the public are giving effect to the Council resolution as to the opening of public wells to Harijans. Will you advise satyagraha on their part?

In the first place, I have no definite information in the matter. Secondly, I am unable to advise satyagraha, at the present stage at any rate.

The tenth and last question is:

> Do you favour the idea of an all-India conference of Harijan leaders for dealing with the question of untouchability?

A thoroughly representative conference cannot fail to be helpful. I should, therefore, welcome the holding of such a conference.

Harijan, 16-9-1933

2. LETTER TO MARGARETE SPIEGEL

September 16, 1933

CHI. AMALA[1],

I have your several letters. You must shed this wretched fear of me. Whatever I said and did at the Ashram was said and done in pure love and for your good. Why should you fear me, if you believe what I say? You have therefore no need to avoid me or fear me. I am keeping well in spite of blood-pressure.

Love.

BAPU

Spiegel Papers. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

3. TALK WITH WOMEN WORKERS[2]

[*September 16, 1933*][3]

I have been saying for years now that those who understand must participate in the production of khadi. But the suggestion has not been taken up. Had it been adopted, khadi activity would have now become widespread and we would not have had to face a difficult situation. What would we lose if we span for half an hour every day? But today it seems as though it were a mere waste. Weavers who are willing to use hand-spun yarn do not get it. I had to tell some of them that I would arrange to get some for them. But if they could not get it, they may use mill yarn. I did not want them to lose their trade. This half an hour of spinning demanded of you should be regarded as easy. If people do not talk flatteringly when you go to sell them khadi, you should put up with their harshness. You deserve it. But if you do as I say, there would be no question of having to hear harsh things from them.

Q. When women used to spin, there was no arrangement for weaving.

[1] A German lady who was taking training at the Ashram for Harijan work. Gandhiji later gave her the Indian name Amala.

[2] & [3] This appeared in Chandrashankar Shukla's "Weekly Letter" under the title "The Easy Way". Two women workers had come to greet Gandhiji on his 65th birthday which, according to the Vikram calendar, fell on September 16. One of them had complained about the fall in khadi sales.

That is true. It was brought to my notice. But what the women used to spin was no yarn at all—what about that? If women were to spin ropes, what should the weavers do? We have so many weaving centres. So, the women themselves are to blame since they did not attempt to learn spinning.

[From Gujarati]
Harijanbandhu, 24-9-1933

4. ANSWERS TO CORRESPONDENTS[1]

[Before *September 17, 1933*]

Happiness and unhappiness always follow us like cold and sunshine.[2] What is there to be happy or unhappy about having a motor-car one day and having to go on foot the next day? Never give up courage and patience. They are the real wealth.

One's dharma is to serve in whatever way one can. Happiness and unhappiness are only attitudes of the mind. But what unhappiness can you have? Unhappiness lies in forgetting Ramanama, and you never forget it.

There is no doubt that God has saved you. He wants you to render more service.

What can we do if some shortcomings[3] come to stay in the body, which in any case is surely going to drop some time? But how can we bestow that power of endurance on all young men? The hope of life does not leave even the old, not to speak of poor little children. God is, of course, the saviour of all.

We cannot insist on applying to Harijans what applies to you and me. We have excluded Harijans from our society. Moreover, we should also look to the situation as it obtains today. Barring a few individuals, where is the boycott of schools and colleges to be found? It would, therefore, be gross injustice if we told Harijans that they would get no help if they went to the common schools and colleges.[4]

[1] Addressed to different correspondents, these appeared under the subtitle "Some Letters". This and the following four items are translated from Chandrashankar Shukla's weekly letter in *Harijanbandhu*, 17-9-1933.

[2] The correspondent had written about his financial difficulties.

[3] The correspondent had fractured his arm.

[4] This was in reply to a Harijan worker who had asked why Gandhiji helped Harijans secure scholarships for attending schools and colleges which, at one time, he wanted to be boycotted. What follows is the reply to another correspondent, a Harijan leader, who had requested Gandhiji to concentrate his energy on Harijan work.

I am already devoting a major portion of my energy to Harijan work. And whether I am in prison or outside, I shall of course continue to do Harijan work till the last moment of my life.

[From Gujarati]

Harijanbandhu, 17-9-1933

5. *A LETTER*[1]

[Before *September 17, 1933*]

To a certain extent self-criticism is necessary. But I have noticed that some people get into this habit and then they can make no progress.[2] Self-criticism can be useful only in so far as it helps progress. If we are not committing now all the heinous crimes that we may have committed in the past it would be as good as piling up those crimes if we wrung our soul by brooding over them. I agree that we must publicly acknowledge a major crime. A votary of truth can do nothing less. But owning up of the crime should not leave any burden on one's mind. Having once washed off the accumulated dross, does one burden oneself with it? But you seem to be doing something of the sort. It is only when truth reveals itself through us that untruth cannot remain hidden from us. But we cannot always find out what untruth is hidden in which part of our being. My sole purpose in writing this is that you must cast off this burden from your mind. That is the mark of *bhakti*[3]. After having sought protection from God a *bhakta*[4] would never feel choked. He would not weep over the thought of his past. He would have no worry about the future. He is master of the present; let him mind it. And God has provided him with the key. "Whatever thou doest . . . dedicate all to me."[5] If a *bhakta* could do this much, he can dance with abandon. If you can thus free your mind, all diseases of body and mind will disappear, and we will take service from you to our heart's content. Please unburden your mind.

[From Gujarati]

Harijanbandhu, 17-9-1933

[1] This appeared under the title "The Mark of *Bhakti*".

[2] This was in reply to a Harijan worker who was obsessed with his own shortcomings.

[3] Devotion

[4] Devotee

[5] *Bhagavad Gita*, IX. 27

6. *TALK WITH A HARIJAN WORKER*[1]

[Before *September 17, 1933*]

My way of service is altogether different. Anyone who wishes to do first-class work, anyone who wishes to be a pure, true servant, needs must acquire the ability. Ordinarily one may do any work one chooses. Who is there to stop him? But the reason why our work does not make rapid progress is that the workers take it up without training themselves for it.[2]

I am willing to go abroad for training.

So much expenditure for so little work! Take whatever vocational training is available here. Then we may think of going abroad. And, anyway, how many persons can be sent abroad?

Please let me know what social service I can do.

This includes everything. Cannot one serve while learning to do it? You must acquire the ability. You will not have what you want unless you are worthy of it. There are any number of people rushing about in the name of service; but have they been doing any good to the community? Anyone who wishes to do constructive work, to render true pure service to his community, acts in a different way altogether. If you want people to build up their character, you must acquire the necessary strength. If you cannot settle down to business, take up some employment and do your job honestly. You can serve the community in this manner also. You would have served your community even by creating an impression that no one can be purer than you. Is it a small matter if people could say about a person that his honesty is unlimited? I can cite some instances of honest servants who have been in charge of the management of their employers' establishments. Employers worship such servants.

I do not want to earn money.

It is not a question of earning money. If you acquire so much prestige that the Hindu community can look upon you as

[1] This appeared under the title "Be Like Nanda".

[2] The Harijan worker was not content with serving through the charkha and wanted to know how he could render immediate service without prior training.

the ideal of an honest Harijan, it will not be a matter of small importance. I have got to say that there have been saints like Nanda[1] among Harijans. Four or five centuries have passed since Nanda's time, but they still sing his praise. Why can such a person not be born among Harijans today? If it could happen in his age, it can as well happen now. We can attain the goal we seek only if Harijans become like Nanda. As for me, I am carrying on the campaign among caste Hindus for the eradication of untouchability and at the same time telling Harijans what their dharma is.

[From Gujarati]

Harijanbandhu, 17-9-1933

7. ADVICE TO A WORKER[2]

[Before *September 17, 1933*]

Workers should be like Malaviyaji, like Narayanshastri[3], Lakshmanshastri[4], or Shridharshastri Pathak. They should be men whose character is as pure as gold. How can we find workers by publishing advertisements? Such people would memorize and reel off speeches. What use could they be to us? And, should we carry on with counterfeit coins because we cannot have mohurs? It is like building castles in the air. I do not approve of it at all. I have never worked in this manner.

Now, how can I all of a sudden assure you that I am going to produce workers?

[From Gujarati]

Harijanbandhu, 17-9-1933

[1] Nandanar of Chidambaram, one of the 63 Saivite saints of Tamil Nadu

[2] This appeared under the title "Qualities of a Worker". It had been suggested that some paid workers be sent for fighting untouchability through propaganda. Chandrashankar Shukla prefaced the report with the following: "Gandhiji expects the propagators to have certain qualifications, such as religious knowledge and purity of character. He said, 'Propaganda cannot be a business. It should be a religious mission.' He disapproved the proposal to have paid workers."

[3] Narayanshastri Marathe, popularly known as Swami Kevalananda

[4] Tarkateertha, Lakshmanashastri Joshi

8. *TALK TO STUDENTS OF GURUKUL KANGRI*[1]

[Before *September 17, 1933*]

We can serve Harijans only by purifying our character. True purity is required for it. It means that you must do penance. I undertook fasts by way of such penance. It did have some immediate effect. And it should continue for many years. Although generally we should keep purifying our *atman* the service of Harijans needs special purification on our part. The purer we are, the better we shall serve the Harijans. Even if there is just one pure man he would have an impact. Such a man would be able to work if he goes among the Harijans, and to melt the hearts of even the sanatanists if he were to go to them. I have no doubt at all that more than Harijans, the sanatanists need to be purified. But who can convince an arrogant man? We would go among the sanatanists and persuade them. If they abuse us, we would not abuse them back. We would not retaliate if they resort to violence. We would nurse them if they were ill; if they are strict about observing rules of conduct, we would be stricter. We would acquire a greater knowledge of the scriptures than they may be having. And then we would be able to make an impression upon them. Wiping out untouchability is a hard task. It cannot be achieved while remaining selfish. We have to work with a benevolent outlook. For that purpose we must purify ourselves day after day.

[From Gujarati]
Harijanbandhu, 17-9-1933

[1] This appeared under the title "Purity, a Worker's Capital".

9. *WHAT SHOULD A BRAHMIN DO?*

In response to my article[1] under the above heading, the same correspondent who hails from Maharashtra writes again as follows.[2]

Many questions arise out of this letter. It is not that the others do not have to suffer the inconveniences which Brahmins do suffer. Nowadays everyone finds it more or less difficult to get employment. Till now, Brahmins could easily find jobs. That is not the case now. There is no doubt that the others faced earlier the same situation which the Brahmins are or appear to be facing now. Where castes prevail, such rise and fall will always be. Hence it is difficult to satisfy everyone.

At the root of this difficulty lies something, which deserves consideration. The number of jobs will always be limited. The number of candidates will go on increasing with time. Hence the right way seems to be to learn to turn away from jobs, turn towards other occupations and qualify ourselves for these. In attempting such changes, difficulties will certainly be experienced during the transitional period, but the result can only be good. Other countries have had similar experiences and, those who were hitherto confined to jobs have taken to professions.

Another noteworthy point is to cut down our expenses, reduce our family's as well as our own wants. The need to make our lives simpler is becoming more and more obvious to the whole world. There is an English adage recommending 'plain living and high thinking'. In India, simplicity is not just a virtue, it is part of dharma.

It is imperative that the women in the family also contribute towards the household expenditure to the best of their abilities. Women of the working class, in addition to housekeeping, earn a little bit by their own labour; why should not other women do likewise? If there is a lone earning member in a family and many

[1] *Vide* Vol. LV, pp. 420-1.

[2] The letter is not translated here. The correspondent had argued that Brahmins could not earn livelihood by imparting the knowledge of Brahman as the general public was not interested in it; the only alternative was employment. Brahmins did not expect any privileges while seeking jobs but at the same time they expected that they would not be penalized for being Brahmins.

mouths to feed, the burden on him cannot but be too much. Hence, those Brahmins who find it difficult to secure employment should consider this suggestion also.

[From Gujarati]

Harijanbandhu, 17-9-1933

10. LETTER TO JAMNALAL BAJAJ

September 17, 1933

CHI. JAMNALAL,

You must have read everything in newspapers. I deliberately omitted to give details in my letters. I hesitate these days to put any burden on you. I did not feel happy, either, that you had to come down from Chikhalda so soon. We will talk now when we meet. I too shall require plenty of rest. Gopi, Gajanan's[1] wife, will most probably accompany me, and I have also invited one Kisan[2], who is a very good woman. She used to enjoy good health, but recently it has gone down a little. I know that, true to your nature, you will willingly shoulder all this burden, but I will try to see that we become no burden to you.

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

Jawaharlal is leaving tonight for Lucknow. He may perhaps come to Wardha later. Jnana must have arrived there now.

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 2925

11. TRIBUTE TO ANNIE BESANT

[*September 20, 1933*][3]

Whilst the people will thank the Almighty for relieving Dr. Besant from lingering illness by sending to her the Angel of Death, thousands will, at the same time, mourn the event. So long as India lives, the memory of the magnificent services rendered by Dr. Besant will also live. She had endeared herself to

[1] Son of Rameshwardas Birla

[2] Kisan Ghumatkar

[3] Dr. Annie Besant died on September 20, 1933.

India by making it the country of her adoption and dedicating her all to her.

M. K. GANDHI

The Bombay Chronicle, 21-9-1933

12. SPEECH AT AHMEDABAD–I[1]

September 21, 1933

You have obliged me by asking me to perform this noble ceremony. I feel highly honoured in doing it. The President[2] has left little for me to say. We heard from him the long list of donations by Sir Chinubhai. While listening to it, it struck me that Sir Chinubhai's donations match the world-famous Parsi donations. Sir Girijaprasad said that Sir Chinubhai's donations were not meant for the members of one community or religion, but for all. Their benefit was available to all the citizens of Ahmedabad. Sir Chinubhai did all he could to encourage the education which he himself had and which helped him rise in life. The President reminded me that it was Sir Chinubhai who had presented me the address when I first arrived in Ahmedabad.[3] The picture is still vivid before my eyes. In donating this statue to the citizens of Ahmedabad, Sir Girijaprasad has given us a glimpse of his filial devotion. I only say "a glimpse" because, as Sir Girijaprasad has rightly observed, one can never completely discharge one's debt to one's parents. Let us all hope—and he has certainly given us reason to hope—that the illustrious son of Sir Chinubhai earns as much as the father and equally liberally gives it away.

Once on an important occasion I had said that the rich have right to earn and accumulate wealth. This world will always call some to adventure. It cannot be stopped. I say then, let these people earn much but let them spend it as if it belonged to the people and give of it generously to others. One of my cherished hopes is that in our country there should be no ill will, no conflict, between the rich and the poor, that both may realize their own dharma and adhere to it. In the world a fierce battle is going on between capital and labour, between the rich and the poor. May our country be saved from this strife. One man's wish

[1] On unveiling the statue of Sir Chinubhai Madhavlal, Baronet

[2] Manibhai Chaturbhai Shah, President, Ahmedabad Municipality

[3] *Vide* Vol. XIII, p. 16.

cannot achieve it. But if many cherished the wish we could achieve this ideal. Through Sir Girijaprasad, I wish to convey to the rich people of Ahmedabad—and by the grace of God there are many here—that they should enhance the legacy left by Sir Chinubhai. It is up to the rich to reach the ideal which I have placed before them. It is my ambition that Ahmedabad may set an example for India, in fact for the whole world.

Before performing the noble ceremony of unveiling the statue, I may say one thing. This statue was ready long ago but because of your desire that it should be unveiled either by Sardar or by me, its installation has had to wait.[1] I was released unexpectedly and when the request came to me, I could not turn it down. I think it is by the grace of God that I have the opportunity to perform this good deed. How can I thank you all—men and women who have come here to demonstrate your respect for Sir Chinubhai? You should show due regard for your fellow citizens who have rendered service to the city. May all the citizens of Ahmedabad, rich as well as poor, live in happiness. This is my prayer to God.

[From Gujarati]

Harijanbandhu, 1-10-1933

13. SPEECH AT AHMEDABAD–II[2]

September 21, 1933

You honoured me by asking me to perform a noble ceremony the first thing in the morning.[3] And now you are asking me to perform another such ceremony. I thank the Municipality as well as the citizens of Ahmedabad for the double honour they have conferred on me. My task has now become a little difficult. In the first place, I would like to express my opinion about the suggestion made by Bhai Rasiklal. I heard only this morning about the proposal to associate my name with this library. There is, I think, no institution with which I have allowed my name to be associated. I have decided to allow nothing of the kind. With apologies to the donors, and without hurting their feelings, I would like to say that ever since I entered public life, or rather

[1] *The Bombay Chronicle*, 22-9-1933, here reports: Mahatmaji felt acutely for the absence of Sardar Vallabhbhai and said it would have been more desirable if this grand and important ceremony had been performed by his hands.

[2] While laying the foundation-stone of the Maneklal Jethalal Library

[3] *Vide* the preceding item.

I was fortunately thrown into it, I have always either prevented or tried to prevent, whomever I could so advise, from associating their or their elders' names with the donations. I do not mean to say that it is a sin to associate one's or one's elder's name with a donation. But such a tendency prevails among people and I have seen this temptation leading to ridiculous results. I have therefore been dissuading all whom I could. I have succeeded in some cases, and where I have failed I have accommodated myself and have also accepted such donations. When I do this I don't mean to sing my own praise or to point out other people's shortcomings. I only wish you would not press me to act contrary to what I have been doing and advocating. I have no false modesty. I cannot have it while adhering to my principles.

There is another potent reason. I am only instrumental in having these books donated. I did not own them. There is not a single thing in the Ashram which exclusively belongs to me. Nor am I a trustee. There is another practice I have adhered to, viz., I should not be a trustee for anything that once belonged to me. I had no right to donate these books. But I exercised the moral right that I enjoyed to persuade the trustees and the Ashramites. Hence I am only a medium or say a post office. I delivered the Ashram's letter to the Municipality. The same is true in the case of the Vidyapith. I cannot give away its books. Kakasaheb and the Vidyapith Committee have the right. I had proposed to amalgamate the Ashram library with the Vidyapith's so that the former could be better utilized. The Ashram is after all a place for manual labour. Moreover we cannot afford a paid librarian there. My idea therefore was to combine the two libraries when eventually peace would return and the library too. Now when the Ashram library has been transferred to the Municipality, I received a letter from Kakasaheb telling me that the Vidyapith library and the building were not in our custody and that if the Government returned the books they too should be handed over to the Municipality. In this way the Vidyapith books also came to the Municipality. I am therefore not responsible for the twin gifts and cannot claim credit for them.

I shall give you the third reason. How can learning be associated with my name? Only manual labour can be associated with my name. So please spare me this burden. I do not want to say just now what is more befitting for me to do. I had a talk with the President and Balubhai in the morning and if they like my suggestion they will put it before you. In any case please do spare me.

Now I come to a different subject. In the morning also I made a reference to Sardar's absence. We have been working together for about eighteen years, and with the passage of time we have been coming closer. The Shastras tell us that husband and wife are two persons but their souls are one. The same applies to the relationship between Sardar and I. I will not ask you to decide who is the wife and who is the husband. We came very close only this time. In spite of working together we never had the time for a heart-to-heart talk. Vallabhbhai stayed with me in Kaira for months but I don't remember if he ever came to see me except on business. During the other struggles too we had only short business-like meetings. Only this time in jail we stayed together. Since there was no work we opened out to each other. At night too we used to draw our cots side by side and talk of the joys and sorrows of life. I say joys and sorrows because it is customary to put it that way; in fact there was no sorrow to speak of, we only spoke of our moments of joy; sorrows we had left behind for you! If asleep Sardar would dream of India. He is a clever man so he believes what applies to him applies to the universe. He has come to the general conclusion that what is true of Ahmedabad is true of Gujarat and what is true of Gujarat is true of India and what is true of India is true of the world. He often dreamt about Ahmedabad. All the time he thought of 'my waterworks', and 'my municipality'. It is true that Ranchhodbhai had the waterworks installed but isn't Sardar his heir? Can Girijaprasad say that the waterworks belong to him? When Ranchhodbhai gave up his ownership it went to the city of Ahmedabad, i.e., to Sardar. You will thus see how fond Sardar is of Ahmedabad. I would know nothing about the Vadilal Hospital[1]. I have never interfered in Vallabhbhai's special activities. I was confident that Vallabhbhai managed them excellently. I came to know a good deal about the hospital while in jail. Although it is presumptuous—since one cannot compare a human being to God —but as Kalapi[2] would put it, I say, wherever I look, I find evidence of Sardar's performance. Sardar, therefore, can well carry the burden. He is a capable person. I cannot carry it.

I congratulate the Municipality too on having had Sardar as its president. This Municipality came into existence with a rich man [as its president]. Then it had a fakir as its president. I wanted Ahmedabad to be a city beautiful. But beautiful in my own sense

[1] Vadilal Sarabhai Hospital
[2] Sursinhji Takhtsinhji Gohil, a poet

of the word. Of course it should have good looking men and women, gardens and scenic beauty but I expect it to have inner beauty as well. Sardar dreams of making Ahmedabad an ideal city and its civic body too an ideal municipality. And he has worked to achieve it. I too share his dreams. When I decided to settle in Ahmedabad I had cherished the dream of beginning my public life here because I saw that this city had wealth and wisdom, it was the capital of Gujarat, the State in which I was born. Ever since then it has been my fond desire to have in Ahmedabad the best library and also other institutions which could draw many people to it. Do not think that the climate of the place is bad. Once there was a proposal that I should go to Mussoorie. Dr. Kanuga said to me that Ahmedabad was as good as Mussoorie. Soon after I gave up the idea of going there. If anything is bad here we are to blame for it. We have made Ahmedabad dirty. Dr. Hariprasad[1] tried hard to make it clean. Yet to this day I cannot certify that Ahmedabad is a clean city. There is no fragrance, the whole city stinks. The neighbourhoods could be cleaned if Dr. Hariprasad could again rally men and women volunteers to do it.

Before I stop, let me set out the ideals I cherish about the library. Have the building of the library planned in such a way that when it expands into new departments, new structures could be annexed to the parent building without their looking hemmed in or without reducing the architecture to a monstrosity. While planning the building see that it can serve as a public lecture hall, a quiet place for students to read and study as also for research scholars. Our ideal should be to make it the largest and the best library in the world. God will grant us the necessary strength. Kakasaheb has suggested that the Vidyapith museum should also be housed in the library. There is no dearth of art in Gujarat. The like of the stone screen of Bhadra is not to be found in the whole world. The crafts of Ahmedabad can hardly be matched. I have been amazed by the skill of the Ahmedabad craftsmen. I have seen them working in the slums. Masters of art do not wait for encouragement. If someone donates Rs. 50,000 to have the museum here itself, it can be done.

Please see that the library makes progress day by day. It would be better if you get one or two persons who could give most of their time to the library. Do not have as your librarian a merchant who can only preserve your books but have someone who

[1] Dr. Hariprasad Desai

appreciates them and can select them. If no one volunteers for the task, offer higher remuneration. Allow the Harijans free use of the library and let them take books home. Please bear the loss if they soil or steal the books. They are lowest even among the poor. Allow this concession to all the poor if you can. That will bring credit to you.

My appeal is the same as that of Bhai Rasiklal that you should select the members of the library committee carefully. It should comprise men of letters. They will help keep the library alive. Do not think of having only the worldly-wise on the committee. Only the learned will know what a good library is and how it can shine forth. Carnegie gave donations to many libraries and many scholars accepted the onerous conditions. But the scholars of Scotland told Carnegie plainly that they did not care for his donations if he were to stipulate such conditions. How would you know what books ought to be had? Masters do not set out to hawk their art. In Gujarat a priceless collection of books lies in the custody of the merchant class. Beautiful collections of Jain literature are wrapped up in their silk cloths. My heart is sore at the sight of these books. What use can these books be when they have fallen into the hands of the ignorant merchants who can only pile up wealth? The Jain religion, too, is withering in their hands because they have reduced dharma to a formal business. Indeed, can dharma adjust itself to the ways of commerce? It is for commerce to adjust itself to the claims of dharma. I therefore appeal to you to have, as far as you can, learned men as members of your committee. May this library prosper.

[From Gujarati]

Harijanbandhu, 1-10-1933

14. A BELATED ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

Sir Lallubhai Samaldas brought from Japan Rs. 1,699-11-0 for Harijan work. This amount was received in Yeravda, but the letter with names accompanying it was given to me only after my release. I was, therefore, unable to acknowledge the donation before now. It comes from the Indian Silk Merchants' Association of Kobe and the letter giving cover to the cheque contains the names of forty-two subscribers. The majority are Sindhi merchants. Whilst I thank them for their donations, I warn them that I had expected much more than what they have sent. I

knew the generosity of my Sindhi friends in South Africa. They cannot be different in Japan. I, therefore, regard their cheque as an earnest of more to come.

Harijan, 23-9-1933

15. *ANOTHER PLAGUE SPOT*

The reader may remember that some months ago I drew public attention to the disgraceful condition of the *bastis* of Allahabad.[1] Professor Malkani[2] has now sent me his impressions of the Delhi *bastis*. They are published in *The Hindustan Times*. These impressions show that the Delhi *bastis* are not much better than the Allahabad ones. There is the same tale of indescribable filth and consequent degradation. The scavengers, on whose careful labour largely depends the health of the inhabitants of Delhi, are housed in cells which are windowless and lightless holes. I cannot do better than reproduce Professor Malkani's closing sentences[3]:

So long as we tolerate such plague spots and so long as we continue to treat most useful servants of society as if they were beyond the pale of humanity, there need be no wonder that we have more than our fair share of diseases which are due to filth and insanitation. Even as a rotten limb affects and corrupts the whole body, so does the condition of scavengers, representing a rotten limb of society, corrupt the whole of it. Unless, therefore, we wake up betimes and adopt summary measures to improve the condition of the scavengers, God's judgment must overtake us. This question of providing decent habitations for the scavengers is not merely for Hindus to tackle but it is for the society at large to deal with. In this matter, therefore, there need be no distinction between reformers and the orthodox, or between Hindus and non-Hindus. Let us hope that the Delhi Municipality, now that its attention is drawn to the disgraceful condition of its *bastis*, will waste no time in taking energetic measures and removing the disgrace.

Harijan, 23-9-1933

[1] *Vide* Vol. LIV, pp. 486-8.

[2] N. R. Malkani

[3] Not reproduced here. The extract described the filthy and unhygienic condition of the slums in which Harijans lived.

16. *SHOCKING, IF TRUE*

Dayananda Dalitoddhar Sabha had its conference at Chamba. I take the following from its resolutions:[1]

It is difficult to believe that any State in India considers the refusal by a class of people to do particular work a crime. I hope that the Chamba State authorities have a convincing reply to the charges embodied in the resolutions, or that the practices referred to by the conference will be given up by the State in response to the respectful request of the conference. I notice that those who took part in the conference were educated and responsible men.

Harijan, 23-9-1933

17. *LETTER TO JAWAHARLAL NEHRU*

Unrevised *September 23, 1933*

MY DEAR JAWAHARLAL,

I was ready to write to you only yesterday. My inquiry was completed at 1 p.m. I have now met Kasturbhai, Mrs. Hathisingh and Shankerlal who knows the family well. I am not quite satisfied with my experiences. I have missed straightforwardness. And yet I have nothing to say against the proposed match. Krishna[2] will be happy enough in the new surroundings. What is more, she seems to have set her heart upon the match. She has been corresponding with Raja's mother. Rajababu is the pet name of her chosen one. There is no question of their leaving anything in Krishna's name. Of course I made it perfectly clear to them that the suggestion as to leaving something in Krishna's name was purely mine, and that even so, I had no intention of making it a condition of marriage. I made the proposal, I told them, because I believe in such arrangement for all girls wherever it was pos-

[1] Not reproduced here. The Aryas had protested against the illegal prosecution of Halies and other communities for refusing to handle carcasses or do other kinds of forced labour and for declining to offer animal sacrifice to a deity.

[2] Addressee's younger sister

sible. If the match is to be finally fixed up, you have to write to Mrs. Hathisingh, Ahmedabad, making the proposal definitely and she will send you her acceptance. She is quite ready for the marriage to take place as early as Krishna wishes. She is desirous (and I concur) that the betrothal and marriage should take place simultaneously. You may now write to young Hathisingh and send for him when you like.

I hope Mother is better as also Kamala[1].

I reached Wardha this morning. Except for the high blood-pressure which the doctors register, there is nothing wrong with me. Nevertheless I am not to move about for at least three weeks from today, i.e., up to 15th October next.

Mathuradas[2] is in Bombay. Chandrashankar[3] and Nayar are with me of course, apart from Ba, Mirabehn and Prabhavati. Prabhudas[4] is also with me.

Love.

BAPU

Gandhi-Nehru Papers, 1933. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

18. TELEGRAM TO JAWAHARLAL NEHRU

WARDHAGANJ,
September 23, 1933

JAWAHARLAL NEHRU
LUCKNOW

YOUR WIRE. POSTED LETTER[5] TODAY. COMPLETED INQUIRY YESTERDAY. RESULT ON WHOLE SATISFACTORY. YOU WILL WRITE MRS. HATHISINGH FORMALLY OFFERING HAND. GLAD MOTHER BETTER.

BAPU

Gandhi-Nehru Papers, 1933. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

[1] Addressee's wife
[2] Mathuradas Trikumji
[3] Chandrashankar Pranshankar Shukla, Editor, *Harijanbandhu*
[4] Son of Chhaganlal Gandhi
[5] *Vide* the preceding item.

19. TALK WITH HARIJAN WORKERS[1]

[Before *September 24, 1933*][2]

Many people feel that their value in the field of service would not be fully recognized till they could earn money themselves. I would tell these people that they would be well protected if they accepted less than what they may be able to earn elsewhere. They run a risk if they received more than what they may be able to get elsewhere. And why should a public servant accumulate any money at all?

If I fall ill I will have to go to a hospital.

And there you would receive right royal treatment.

I never feel that I have lost what I have given away. I have said that I am the richest man in the world. I have never experienced want of money.

I have kept aside some money for spending it in public service.

If you have the money, you would feel like spending it when it seems necessary. But who are you to spend it?

The subtle pride corrodes man. One can overcome the pride that is apparent. But one can do nothing about the subtle pride. It has brought about the miserable downfall of many a man. From the popular point of view the man who has money and yet does not spend it for himself is a saint. It can be said of him that he spends the money for the people. In that case, why should he not hand it over to the people? I say this because I have acted on this principle. I used to think that I had been practising law for the sake of the people. But then I wondered why I should not devote to the service of the people the time I spent in practising law. That is why I gave up my practice. Whatever money I had in reserve, I used to spend for the people. Then I thought, "Why not hand over to the people what is to be used for them?" Again, I thought why I should not form a trust for the use of money if it was to be given away. I formed a trust but I was not one of the trustees. Nor was I on [the board of] the

[1]&[2] The talk appeared under the title "Reliance on God or on Money". This and the following item are translated from the weekly letter in *Harijanbandhu*, 24-9-1933.

Phœnix Trust. I am not associated with the Ashram Trust either. I exercise only moral authority. The trustees can drive me out any time they want. After all, I judge others as I would myself. I have been watching one thing after another. Ever since I came to India I have been telling you that it is unbearable that you should have so much money with you.

I feel ashamed of going abegging.

You should not find it difficult. It hurts me to know that you find it difficult to ask for money. What could be done about it? Either you must live in such a way that you would need no money at all, or if you do need it, you should not feel ashamed to ask for it. There are 56 lakhs of vagrants in India and they get their food. And when you are devoting all your twenty-four hours to the country you do have a right to get your food. We have two alternatives: either we go and ask for it when there is the need, or we do not move out even when the need is there. What would be the result? We would be in great trouble at the most, wouldn't we? God does not ask of us more than that. This is true freedom. Why should we rely so much on money? Why not seek the help of God instead of relying on the money lying with us? That at least is the test I would propose. Years ago I had taken out an insurance policy in Bombay at the instance of my brother. Then from Africa I wrote to Revashankarbhai that the policy should be cancelled.[1] I let go the amount I had been paying for seven years. I asked why not trust God instead of trusting the money? I asked myself whether I wanted to serve the people or myself. If I wanted to serve the people, what need did I have for money? At least a few people must come forward who would voluntarily accept poverty.

Please forgive me for talking to you in such plain words. But who else would talk that way if not I?

[From Gujarati]

Harijanbandhu, 24-9-1933

[1] *Vide* Vol. XXXIX, pp. 209-10 and 212

20. APPEAL AT PRAYER MEETING[1]

[Before *September 24, 1933*]

I would like to tell all the men and women who have come to attend the prayer that if the Government allows me to remain free, I would devote myself mainly to Harijan work. And so, it is my duty to beg for the sake of the Harijans. Men and women who come to attend the prayers may bring with them whatever they feel like and whatever they can afford. It serves two purposes: some amount is collected for Harijans, and then, we have an idea as to how many persons give for the service of Harijans and how many approve of the work. I do not want a single pie from those who do not approve of this work. If anyone gave for my sake, it would be meaningless. Hence, I wish that only those people who have faith in this work should donate money.

[From Gujarati]

Harijanbandhu, 24-9-1933

21. LETTER TO JAWAHARLAL NEHRU

September 24, 1933

MY DEAR JAWAHARLAL,

I had a talk today with Jamnalalji about the proposed match. He seems to know the family well. He is decidedly of opinion that the family, apart from Kasturbhai of course, is not as well off as they would appear to be. He is even of opinion that they may be actually in want. I thought I should pass this news on to you. He too is anxious that I should let you have his opinion. Personally I remain unaffected by it. But he thinks that Krishna should know it. So far as I can judge, nothing will affect Krishna's choice unless she has something definite against the young man. And she would be quite right. Kasturbhai is strongly of opinion that Krishna's choice is good.

Love to you all.

BAPU

[1] This appeared under the title "The Begging Bowl".

[PS.]

You may succeed in making persons like me not addressing you as Pundit but I see that the adjective will abide with you.

[PPS.]

What I wanted to suggest was that if this marriage comes off and if Mother agrees, the religious ceremony may be performed at Wardha. I know the difficulty. I am thinking selfishly I know. I have simply thrown out the suggestion. Let us see what happens. I am likely to see Kasturbhai.

Gandhi-Nehru Papers, 1933. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

22. *LETTER TO VALLABHBHAI PATEL*

WARDHA,
September 24, 1933

BHAI VALLABHBHAI,

I got your letter of the 19th in Bombay and of the 21st today in Wardha after I had entered upon my weekly silence.

* * *[1]

I understand what you say regarding your teeth. I think you should be able to carry on with them for some time.

With me are Ba, Mirabehn, Chandrashankar, Prabhudas, Nayar, Anandi[2], Nirmala (Mahadev's), Sharada (Chimanlal's) and Prabhavati. Brijkishan also is here. He will return home on Tuesday. I met Radha[3] and Santok[4] on the way. Radha keeps good health these days. She is your neighbour. Write to her. Lilavati[5] is in a sanatorium at Deolali. Keshu[6] is here. He is working in Jamnalalji's gin. I have got his pay fixed at Rs. 50 per month. The nature of his work is good. If he is steady, he will go forward. Jamnalalji seems to be satisfied with him. N.[7] and Amala are problems. The former is an emotional

[1] Omission as in the source
[2] Daughter of Lakshmidas Asar
[3] Daughter of Maganlal Gandhi
[4] Widow of Maganlal Gandhi
[5] Lilavati Asar
[6] Keshav, Maganlal Gandhi's son
[7] An American woman. The name is omitted in this and subsequent items.

type, and the latter has no sense. She can't do any work. Both are something of a burden here. I will try to see if the burden can be lightened. Duncan and Mary Barr are doing very well. Both are hard-working and upright. Narahari's children, Vanamala and Mohan, don't keep good health and have gone to Kathlal. I met them in Ahmedabad. They were to leave for Kathlal on Friday. Amina's[1] children feel perfectly happy with the other children. They will stay during the vacation in the red bungalow[2]. Sirius was ill. He is all right now. He was in a hospital. I met Rama Joshi. She was quite well. Her health is improving rapidly indeed. She could raise her arm fairly well. Mani came to Bombay on the very day I left it. She spent most of the time with me. I took her with me even when I called on Elwin[3]. I have advised her to see you and then come to me after getting her teeth and eyes treated. Aunt is still in Bombay, and so also Mathuradas. He feels very much tired. He had shouldered a fairly heavy responsibility. Sastri (of *Harijan*) is doing well. Chandrashankar will accompany me and send all the Gujarati material from where we are. I have written to Prithuraj[4] to stay on in Calicut. Indu[5] is in Bhavnagar. He is doing fairly well there. Jayaprakash must have returned to his father. He was in Bombay till I left. He used to come and see me. He saw Prabhavati daily. I know his charge against me. But I am helpless. He seems to have calmed down a little now. Ramdas's own mind is his enemy. And so I can't say anything about him. • When will he become really calm? Nimu[6] keeps indifferent health. The Bengal problem[7] is in my mind. I will see what I can do. Jamnalal will not go again to a hill station just now. He had been to one and stayed there for ten days. I will try to persuade him, though he feels better these days.

Anandi and the other girls and Qureshi's children are in Anasuyabehn's Harijan Boarding. I thought that was the proper place for our children. They are very happy there. Narandas's Purushottam is engaged to the daughter of Harakhchand[8], the

[1] Amina Qureshi, wife of Gulam Rasool Qureshi

[2] Dr. Pranjivan Mehta's house near the Ashram

[3] Verrier Elwin

[4] Son of Lakshmidas Asar

[5] Indu Parekh, an Ashram student

[6] Nirmala, wife of Ramdas Gandhi

[7] The reference is to the agitation of the caste Hindus of Bengal against the Yeravda Pact.

[8] A social worker from Chorwad

brother of Jivanlal[1]. I didn't like the engagement because both the parties belong to the same caste. But they say that she is a good girl, and so Narandas also gave his consent. Jamna[2] is in Rajkot. Kanu[3] also is there. He studies what he can in Jamnadas's[4] school. Mahadev's Babu[5] is with his mother's sister in Bulsar. He has written to me that he will go and stay with Anandi after Diwali. I get reports about Rajenbabu every other day. His health is improving very well. Lakshmi[6] is here. She was to go to Jullundur. On second thoughts, Devdas got the plan abandoned. It is still not finally decided what should be done. Prabhudas's problem is still not solved. That is why he has come with me. . . .[7] has as good as become a sadhu. He is all the time discontented.

Even if you stop after completing the *Gita*, you will have made fairly good progress.

The Ashram dairy is being run near Kankaria. Titus is in charge of it and Shankerlal Banker exercises general supervision. It is running fairly well. Jawaharlal's Krishnakumari will most probably be engaged to the son of Kasturbhai's sister, who has just returned from England after qualifying for the Bar. I met Kasturbhai, his sister and her son. It was the parties' own choice. They had met in Bombay twice or thrice at Rao's place. Saruprani[8] has given her consent. The formal betrothal will take place in a few days. If it does, a big load will be off Saruprani's head.

I am fairly well. I don't know whether or not the blood-pressure remains high here. The doctors here are not of that level. Nor is there the need. I drink one pound of milk at present and eat green vegetables twice every day. The latter include gourd, ridge gourd, etc. The weight was 99 lb. when I was weighed on my arrival here. I will weigh myself again after a few days. Ba is fine, and so is Mira. Jamnalalji's Kamala[9] was in Dinshaw Mehta's sanatorium. She seems to have benefited a little. She has come with me here. Kamalnayan[10] also is here.

[1] Jivanlal Motichand Shah
[2] Wife of Narandas Gandhi
[3] Son of Narandas Gandhi
[4] Jamnadas Gandhi of the National School, Rajkot
[5] Narayan Desai, usually referred to as Bablo
[6] Wife of Devdas Gandhi
[7] The name is omitted in the source.
[8] Mother of Jawaharlal Nehru
[9] Kamala Nevatia, wife of Rameshwardas
[10] Son of Jamnalal Bajaj

Vakil's school is closed at present because of the plague. It will be shifted to Vile Parle now.

My programme, up to October 15, is to rest here itself.

Since the Government has not taken possession of the Ashram[1], it is now being converted permanently into a Harijan colony. Jamnalal has approved of the idea. Friends in Ahmedabad, Ranchhodbhai and others have also approved of it. It is planned to have some Harijan quarters, a tannery, a Harijan hostel and an office of the Harijan Seva Sangh there. I am thinking of handing over the land and the buildings to the All-India Harijan Seva Sangh. If you wish to offer any comments about this, please write to me. I think I have written a fairly long letter.

Are you satisfied now?

Blessings from
BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro–2: Sardar Vallabhbhaine, pp. 26-30

23. APPEAL FOR FLOOD RELIEF IN ORISSA

September 24, 1933

Appealing for funds for the relief of flood-stricken Orissa, Mr. Gandhi says that the affected area covers two thousand miles. The people affected number three lakhs. One thousand five hundred villages have been destroyed. Twenty thousand houses have collapsed and the damage is estimated at Rs. 15,00,000. Mr. Gandhi says that it would be necessary to provide relief to people actually in want of food and clothing for twelve months, for they will not have, till the next year's crops are ready, the wherewithal to keep body and soul together. At least, five lakhs of rupees will be required to help those who can be proved to be clearly indigent.

The Indian Annual Register, July-December 1933, Vol. II, p. 10

[1] In July 1933, Gandhiji had offered to hand over the Ashram to the Government; *vide* Vol. LV, pp. 301-4.

24. *MESSAGE FOR HARIJAN DAY*

[*September 24, 1933*][1]

On the occasion of the Harijan Day, I sincerely hope that pure love will be roused in the hearts of caste Hindus towards their Harijan brothers and sisters, and that every Hindu, man or woman, will be convinced of the need for the eradication of untouchability.

The Hindu, 25-9-1933

25. *LETTER TO N. R. MALKANI*

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM, WARDHA,
[*September*][2] *26, 1933*

MY DEAR MALKANI,

I have your letter of 8th inst. in reply to mine of the 2nd inst. I was not able to acknowledge that letter earlier, and now I have your latest letter enclosing your report on the *bastis*. I have already tackled the first portion of the report[3]. But I shall write to you later on it, after I have finished reading the whole.

Your suggestions about Harijan work are good. I can be of little help to you, especially at the present moment. But you must discuss them with Thakkar Bapa. You will presently hear something about industrial schools. I quite agree with you as to the importance of the tanning industry. I am working at the problem even now.

The work among Bhangis is certainly essential, if it is also uphill.

[1] The message was read at the third Harijan Day meeting held at Wardha on September 24, under the presidentship of Jamnalal Bajaj. The first and the second Harijan Day were observed on December 18, 1932 and April 30, 1933.

[2] Illegible in the source

[3] *Vide* p. 18.

I endorse your suggestion that you should be offered facilities for travelling and studying the various organizations.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

SJT. N. R. MALKANI
SERVANTS OF THE UNTOUCHABLES SOCIETY
BIRLA MILLS, DELHI

From a photostat: G.N. 900

26. LETTER TO V. RAGHAVIAH[1]

September 26, 1933

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter.

In coming to the various decisions I had all the arguments before me. You will not, therefore, expect me, especially in the present state of my health, to cover the same ground again in defence of what I have done. But the time will certainly show which way truth lay.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

SJT. VENNELAKANTI RAGHAVIAH
NELLORE
(SOUTH INDIA)

From a copy: C.W. 10448. Courtesy: K. Lingaraju

[1] The addressee, a Congressman and tribal welfare worker, had protested against Gandhiji's fast in connection with the Harijan problem and wrote that he was side-tracking the economic issue.

27. LETTER TO JAWAHARLAL NEHRU

September 28, 1933

MY DEAR JAWAHARLAL,

I have your several letters. I had a long chat with Rafi[1]. He will tell you all about it. I adhere to the opinion that it will do no good to have the A.I.C.C. meeting. But that does not mean that it will deeply hurt me if such a meeting was held. On the contrary if a sufficient number desire it, it is their duty to send a requisition for the meeting. What I feel is that we may not take the initiative. If you personally feel that it is better to hold the meeting even though there is no requisition, you should hold it. I know that I am not in touch even with the opinion of workers. Therefore my opinion may safely be discounted by those who have a decided opinion the other way.

The other point I would like to clear apart from the impression that Rafi may give you of my talks is about the workers. Whilst I shall try to do what I can, I am firmly of opinion that every province should support its own workers and that every district or tehsil should support its. Unless we reach that state, ours must remain a house of cards. I think that you should take up the begging bowl in the province and set the pace and the example. My ideal is that every worker should find his maintenance from the area he may serve and feel proud of it. Every labourer is worthy of his hire.

The rest from Rafi.

I hope both Ma and Kamala are better. You will tell me in due course what Dr. Bidhan has to say.

Love.

BAPU

[PS.]

Of the personal letters I need say nothing. I hope you had my two letters[2] written . . .[3]

Gandhi-Nehru Papers, 1933. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

[1] Rafi Ahmed Kidwai

[2] *Vide* pp. 19-20 and 23-4.

[3] The source is illegible here.

28. LETTER TO F. MARY BARR

September 28, 1933

CHI. MARY[1],

I am delighted you are normal today. I think that it is better for you to take the orthodox medical treatment and get well. Injections are the order of the day nowadays. You had better take them. And take what food they permit. If you do not need N.'s help, let her come away. I know that the introduction of strangers disturbs doctors in a well-managed hospital.

May God be with you.

Love.

BAPU

From a photostat: G.N. 6007. Also C.W. 3333. Courtesy: F. Mary Barr

29. LETTER TO BHAGWANJI A. MEHTA

WARDHA,
September 28, 1933

BHAI BHAGWANJI,

I got your letter. . . .[2] May your efforts succeed. Leave nothing undone. . . .[3] If they cannot live together in perfect harmony, do not hesitate to separate the shares.[4]

I am not writing a separate letter to Ratubhai[5].

Vandemataram from
MOHANDAS

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 5820. Also C.W. 3043. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

[1] The superscription in this and other letters to the addressee is in Devanagari script.

[2]&[3] The source is damaged here.

[4] This was regarding the property of Pranjivandas Mehta.

[5] Ratilal Sheth, father-in-law of Chhaganlal Mehta

30. LETTER TO NANABHAI I. MASHRUWALA

WARDHA,
September 28, 1933

BHAI NANABHAI[1],

I got your letter. You ought not to come here despite your weak health. I am quite well. When I have regained complete strength and can travel, your love will certainly draw me to Akola. Manilal[2] seems quite busy. He has undertaken a big responsibility.

Jamnalalji gave me a report about Tara[3].

Blessings from
BAPU

SJT. NANABHAI MASHRUWALA
AKOLA, BERAR

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 6689. Also C.W. 4334. Courtesy: Kanubhai Mashruwala

31. LETTER TO NALINIKANT SHETH

WARDHA,
September 28, 1933

CHI. NALINIKANT,

I got the letters sent by you. I have sent a reply to Rangoon. I am quite well.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 7174. Also C.W. 4670. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

[1] Father-in-law of Manilal Gandhi
[2] Manilal Gandhi
[3] Addressee's daughter

32. LETTER TO MATHURADAS TRIKUMJI

September 28, 1933

I enjoy complete peace here. They don't permit anybody to see me before 4 o'clock. The time between 4 and 5 is set apart for visitors. I spin only at that time. I sleep on the terrace. I can drink sufficient quantity of milk. . . .[1] Do not, therefore, believe even Jamnalalji's report. The blood-pressure will come down of its own. It is only now that the weight can increase.

* * *[2]

Don't work at the cost of your health. Really speaking, you should go away somewhere for a while and take complete rest. Is that possible?

[From Gujarati]

Bapuni Prasadi, p. 136

33. TELEGRAM TO "MATHRUBHUMI"

September 29, 1933

MR. MADHAVAN NAIR'S DEATH IS A GREAT NATIONAL LOSS.[3] CONVEY CONDOLENCE TO THE FAMILY ON BEHALF OF JAMNALALJI AND SELF.

The Hindu, 30-9-1933

34. LETTER TO AGATHA HARRISON

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM, WARDHA,
September 29, 1933

MY DEAR AGATHA,

I know I have not been fair to you. You have been pouring letters on me, and I have been satisfied with merely sending you a line. The fact is that I have not yet regained all the lost energy, and what there is of it has to be devoted to the immediate work

[1]&[2] Omissions as in the source
[3] *Vide* also "Speech at Public Meeting, Calicut", 13-1-1934.

at hand. Hence, I have to neglect many things that I would otherwise have done. Your letters have come under the category of neglected ones. I have relied upon Andrews and Mira for writing to you. But your two letters, those of 9th and 16th inst., demand a fairly full answer from me.

I understand all that you say and that you have omitted to say about the Midnapore incident. I hope that you got copies of all the statements made by me. I offer no apology for what I have said about Midnapore.[1] I could say nothing less and nothing more; for that statement contained cent per cent truth. But how is one to overtake the deliberate campaign of misrepresentation? Every word that I say is distorted. Where distortion is not possible they do not hesitate to cut out sentences from my statements, which would make them read differently from what they would if they were read in conjunction with the sentences cut out. But I remain unmoved by these tactics. They are not new to me. I have boundless faith in my mission and in my own truth. The only thing, therefore, to do is not to enter into an elaborate explanation, for it means nothing, but on due occasion to repeat the same truth with added emphasis.

The position of friends in England is somewhat different. They are naturally anxious to show some result. I would, however, ask friends on such occasions to remain unperturbed, because at the present moment yours will be a voice in the wilderness, and if you attempted to be apologetic about what I might have said, you would be doing an injury to the cause. I am trying a tremendous experiment. Non-violence regulates every breath of my life. I do not embellish what I write. I conceal nothing. Therefore, I would not like friends excusing any action or word of mine. When they do not understand it they may remain silent. When they disagree, after having all the facts and after having weighed them, I would not mind their open disapproval. It would really serve the cause. Take this Midnapore statement. I know that terrorism is taking a deeper root owing to the counter-terrorism of the Government. The counter-terrorism is much more mischievous in its effect, because it is organized and corrupts a whole people. Instead of rooting out terrorism it creates an atmosphere for the approval of terrorist methods and thus gives them an artificial stimulus. It may not show immediate results, but it certainly prepares the future for wider activities along those lines. Hence, it is necessary to bring out this point forcibly when any

[1] *Vide* Vol. LV, "Statement to the Press", p. 399.

eruption takes place as that of Midnapore, and if the truth cannot be said forcibly, it is obvious that silence is the only alternative. A half-hearted operation is much more dangerous than no operation. I say all this with my knowledge of non-violence and of ascertained facts.

Then take my fast, or rather all the recent fasts. If friends over there have not understood them to the extent of being able to justify them, they could ignore them, or, having procured all the materials for a judgment, if the judgment went against me, they should not hesitate to pronounce it, and if they endorse them, then their approval should be unequivocal. You are there in a hopeless minority. All I wish, therefore, for you is to be firm in whatever action you take, that is, if you have faith in yourselves, in the Indian cause and in me through whom today the cause is represented to you. I shall never misunderstand you. I know that whatever you, a mere handful, do you will do wholeheartedly. More than that I do not expect, no one can or should.

I do not know whether I have made myself clearly understood by you. If I have failed, you should dismiss this letter from your mind and tell me where you have not understood me.

As for my health I am slowly regaining strength. I am supposed to have quiet and rest at least up to the 23rd October after which, if all goes well, a touring programme will be fixed up. Andrews is in Orissa. Mahadev is in the Belgaum Jail, Devdas in Multan Jail. His wife is here. Pyarelal is in the Nasik Jail. His mother and brother are here, on their way to Nasik. Mira is here, of course.

Love.

BAPU

MISS AGATHA HARRISON
2 CRANBOURNE COURT
ALBERT BRIDGE ROAD
LONDON S.W. 11

From a photostat: G.N. 1468

35. LETTER TO F. MARY BARR

September 29, 1933

CHI. MARY,

Your love note to hand. One may not whim patients beyond a point. I made a stupid mistake in sending N. in the very first instance with you. Please do not ask for her. When you are restored and come back to me, I shall be able to convince you that I was right. I am detaining her for her sake. I now understand that Duncan will stay with you. I am glad. I cannot trace Saraswati. As soon as I do, I shall speak to her. If she consents, she will be sent. You must forgive the changes for the time being. If N. had not been withdrawn, no changes would have been necessary. As soon as you are suited there will be no change. I hope however that the nursing staff there is quite suitable and adequate.

May God restore you soon.

Love.

BAPU

[PS.]

I am not sending Mira because she has to give nearly four hours daily to Amala. She is wasting her time.

BAPU

From a photostat: G.N. 6008. Also C.W. 3334. Courtesy: F. Mary Barr

36. LETTER TO RAMESHWARDAS PODDAR

September 29, 1933

CHI. RAMESHWARDAS,

There can be no doubt at all that Ramanama is the most effective remedy for you, me and everybody else who has the faith. It is not for the blameless and the healthy, but for people like us who are sinful and full of disease. We should, therefore, go on repeating it with unwavering faith whether or not we see any result.

Blessings from
BAPU

SJT. RAMESHWARDAS [C/o] BHOLARAM JOHARMAL
DHULIA, DIST. KHANDESH

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 209

37. LETTER TO PARIKSHITLAL L. MAJMUDAR

September 29, 1933

BHAI PARIKSHITLAL,

I got your letter. Jivanlalbhai and Nanabhai[1] will try about the Ashram in Kathiawar after Diwali. We will give them whatever help we can in their efforts. If they can do nothing, I think it will not be possible for us to maintain the Ashram. But I am sure that they will not let it die. Whether the ashrams at Bhavnagar and Vartej should be combined, requires to be considered.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 3996

[1] Nrisimhaprasad Kalidas Bhatt

38. LETTER TO JASHBHAI

September 29, 1933

BHAI JASHBHAI,

I got your letter. I cannot guide you from here. Do as Chimanlal advises. If necessary, he will consult me. Don't yield to anything through helplessness.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 23173

39. LETTER TO MANIBEHN PATEL

September 29, 1933

CHI. MANI,

I got your postcard. Stay there as long as necessary and get well, and then come. I also had a letter from Father, from which I have come to know that now Chandubhai[1] is with him. I am very glad. Continue to write to me. Inform Dahyabhai[2] that I have written to Karamchand and replied to the questions. I am well.

Blessings from
BAPU

SHRI MANIBEHN PATEL
PAREKH STREET
SANDHURST ROAD
BOMBAY 4

[From Gujarati]
Bapuna Patro–4: Manibehn Patelne, p. 108

[1] Dr. Chandubhai Desai
[2] Addressee's brother

40. LETTER TO D. B. KALELKAR

[Before *September 30, 1933*][1]

CHI. KAKA,

. . .[2]

I have been thinking of handing over the Ashram permanently to the All-India Harijan Sevak Sangh for use as a Harijan settlement, a Harijan hostel, office of the Harijan Sevak Sangh and a tannery. What do you think about it? Jamnalalji liked the idea very much. Chhaganlal, Chimanlal and Maganbhai also have liked it.

Let me know your plans.

I am fixed here up to October 15 for reasons of health.

I am well on the whole. I have brought a large army with me. Anandi, Bachu[3] and Babu[4] have accompanied me, as also Prabhudas. Mohan[5] and Vanamala[6] have gone to Kathlal.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: C.W. 9478. Courtesy: D. B. Kalelkar

41. NEED FOR A DEFINITION

A curious case was filed in the Court of the Munsif of Orai. The suit was in respect of the official nomination of a Mussalman as a representative of the Harijans of Konch and was brought by three Harijans against the Secretary of State for India in Council and others, for unseating the nominated member and for a declaration that, under the Municipalities Act, only a Hindu Harijan could be nominated. The judgment of the Court went against the plaintiff, owing to the proverbial uncertainty of law. I do

[1] From the reference to Gandhiji's intention of handing over the Satyagraha Ashram to the Harijan Sevak Sangh; *vide* "Letter to G. D. Birla", pp. 41-3.

[2] Some portion has been scored out here.

[3] Nirmala, step-sister of Mahadev Desai

[4] Sharda, daughter of Chimanlal Shah

[5]&[6] Son and daughter of Narahari Parikh

not propose to examine the merits of the judgment. I simply want the public to know and realize that the law is not only uncertain about the definition of the Harijan class, described in the judgment as 'depressed classes', but there is as yet, if the judgment is correct, no legal definition at all of the term. If such is the case, it is not difficult to understand that this want of definition may easily lead to gross injustice or even more deplorable results. It can be a fruitful source of irritation and internal quarrels; quarrels between caste Hindus and Harijans, between Harijans and Harijans, and between Hindus and non-Hindus. If untouchability is not to be clothed with statutory sanction, it is surely necessary for the public to concentrate their attention on arriving at a proper definition. The reader will understand my meaning more fully, if he carefully studies the following extract[1] from the judgment I have referred to.

Harijan, 30-9-1933

42. HARIJAN BOARDING HOUSES

The Manager of a Harijan boarding house writes:[2]

This is an old tale. I have no doubt that in every boarding house for students, all labour, including scavenging, should be performed by the boarders. Such a plan does not interfere with the boarders' studies. Indeed, it adds reality to them and promotes the health of the students, and saves money into the bargain. Those managers, therefore, who, for the sake of gaining cheap popularity, or, being too lazy to discuss such matters with their students, will not induce the latter to perform all the necessary labour for their Homes, will be doing a distinct disservice to their wards. Such labour should be regarded as part of the students' education. But there is one condition attached to the demand upon students to do the daily labour. The managers should set the example by taking part in it themselves. Then there will be no danger of "the low mentality worsening".

Harijan, 30-9-1933

[1] Not reproduced here. It was stated in the judgment: "The phrase 'depressed classes' is nowhere defined in the body of the Municipalities Act. The court is not aware that there exists any legal definition of this phrase as yet recognized by law. . . ."

[2] The letter is not reproduced here. The correspondent had asked if Gandhiji considered it objectionable "to ask the inmates to clean the vessels".

43. LETTER TO G. D. BIRLA

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM, WARDHA,
September 30, 1933

DEAR GHANSHYAMDAS,

As you are aware, the 'Satyagraha Ashram' grounds with the buildings in Sabarmati were abandoned on the 1st of August last by the Ashram people. I had expected that the Government would, in view of my letter[1] addressed to them, take charge of this abandoned property, but they did not do so. It then became a question with me as to what was my duty in the circumstances. I felt that it was wrong altogether to allow the valuable buildings to waste. I consulted friends and co-workers and came to the conclusion that the best use to make of the Ashram was to dedicate it once for all for the service of the Harijans. I placed my proposal before the trustees[2] of the Ashram who are out, as also fellow members. They have, I am happy to say, whole-heartedly approved of it. When the property was abandoned there certainly was the expectation that some day, whether through an honourable settlement or India coming to her own, the trustees would resume possession. Under the new proposal, the trustees divest themselves entirely of the property. This procedure is permissible under the Trust-deed[3], service of the Harijans being one of the objects of the trust. Therefore, the new proposal is wholly in keeping with the letter and spirit of the constitution[4] of the Ashram, as also of the Trust.

The question that the trustees and I had to consider was, to whom was the property to be transferred for the specific use I have mentioned; and we came unanimously to the conclusion that it should be transferred to the all-India Harijan organization for all-India use. The objects of the Trust are: (i) to settle on the Ashram ground approved Harijan families subject to regulations to be framed; (ii) to open a hostel for Harijan boys and girls with

[1] Dated July 26, *vide* Vol. LV, pp. 301-4.
[2] Jamnalal Bajaj and Chhaganlal Gandhi
[3] *Vide* Vol. XXIX, pp. 434-6.
[4] *Vide* Vol. XXXVI, pp. 398-410.

liberty to take non-Harijans; (iii) to conduct a technological department for teaching the art of skinning carcasses, tanning the hide so obtained, curing it and manufacturing leather so prepared into shoes, sandals and other articles of daily use; and lastly, to use the premises as offices for the Central Board or the Gujarat provincial organization or both, and such other allied uses that the committee, referred to in the following paragraph, may think proper.

On behalf of the trustees, I suggest that the Servants of Untouchables Society should appoint a special committee with yourself and the Secretary as ex-officio members, and three Ahmedabad citizens, with power to this committee to add to their number, to take over this Trust and to give effect to its objects.

Two friends who have been always associated with the Ashram, viz., Sjts. Budhabhai and Juthabhai, have offered to reside on the premises as honorary managers. They have their own means and have been devoted to the service of the Harijans for a long time. There is also an inmate[1] of the Ashram, who has dedicated his life to Harijan service, and who will gladly stay on the premises. He has almost become a specialist as a teacher of Harijan boys and girls. The committee I have suggested, therefore, should have no difficulty in managing the Trust; nor is it necessary that all the activities I have mentioned should be simultaneously and immediately undertaken. Some Harijan families, as you are aware, are already living there. It has long been a dream of the members of the Ashram to establish a colony of Harijan families, but beyond having a few of them we were not able to make further progress. Experiments in tanning were also conducted there. Manufacture of sandals was going on up to the time of disbandment. The buildings contain a spacious hostel easily accommodating 100 boarders. It has a fairly big weaving shed and other buildings exceptionally fitted for the uses I have named. The property contains 100 acres. I venture to say, therefore, that the site is none too large for the fulfilment of the objects mentioned, but it is large enough for the response that may be reasonably expected for some time to come. I hope that the Society will have no objection to accept the offer of the

[1] Bhagwanji Purushottam Pandya who had left Burma to settle in the Ashram

trustees and to take over the responsibility implied in the acceptance.[1]

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

SJT. GHANSHYAMDAS BIRLA
PRESIDENT
SERVANTS OF UNTOUCHABLES SOCIETY
BIRLA MILLS, DELHI

C.W. 7937. Courtesy: G. D. Birla

44. LETTER TO ATMA S. KAMALANI

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM, WARDHA,
September 30, 1933

MY DEAR KAMALANI,

I have your letter.

You have not given me any alternative to fasts. But you need not be agitated over my prospective fasts. They are not lightly undertaken and for the most part they are inspired and therefore I may not be held responsible for them. The inspiration may be a hallucination. Whilst the hallucination lasts, reason is suspended and all appeal to it becomes vain. Do you not see this insurmountable difficulty in the way of myself or friends dissuading me from a fast so undertaken?

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

SJT. ATMA S. KAMALANI
JT. HON. SECRETARY
'FRIENDS OF INDIA'
46 LANCASTER GATE
LONDON W. 2

From a photostat: G.N. 1531

[1] In his reply dated October 4, 1933, the addressee accepted Gandhiji's offer and requested him to ask those who were already there to continue to stay and look after the estate as before.

45. LETTER TO C. F. ANDREWS

WARDHA,
September 30, 1933

MY DEAR CHARLIE,

The pot is calling the kettle black! I see that anxiety complex is again on you? Have I not said 'Do not trust newspaper reports'? I am not going out touring till doctors pronounce me as fit and in no case before 23rd October. I assure you that nothing will be done in a hurry. And why will you not trust the man on the spot? Surely Jamnalalji won't let me stir out till he is quite satisfied as to my fitness for doing so.

After all I was able to spare a few minutes to peep into Verrier's room. He was looking fit. He is making very steady progress.

My weight has gone up and the blood-pressure is decidedly less than at Bombay.

Love.

MOHAN

[PS.]

What about Amiyo?

From a photostat: G.N. 3795

46. LETTER TO TEJ BAHADUR SAPRU

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM, WARDHA,
September 30, 1933

DEAR DR. SAPRU,

I was delighted to receive your letter. Of course, I knew why you were not writing to me. I could never be guilty of thinking that the absence of any letter from you was due to want of affection or courtesy.

I am still trying to regain my lost strength. It is slowly coming to me.

I am trying all I can to overtake the orthodox prejudices against Harijans. I quite agree with you that "our attitude towards them is the darkest blot on our character". I know that

in this matter I can rely upon your whole-hearted assistance, but in writing to me I don't like your confining yourself merely to the Harijan question. You may not take any active part in politics or political discussions, but surely you will not debar friends from the benefit of your advice, guidance and ripe experience. Whatever may be the differences between us in our outlook, you know that I have very high regard for you and your opinions. I would, therefore, like you to give me briefly your London experiences[1] and the opinion you have formed upon them.

Seth Jamnalalji joins me in sending you regards.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

SIR TEJ BAHADUR SAPRU
19 ALBERT ROAD, ALLAHABAD

Gandhi-Sapru Correspondence: G. 26. Courtesy: National Library, Calcutta

47. LETTER TO VALLABHBHAI PATEL

WARDHA,
September 30, 1933

BHAI VALLABHBHAI,

I got your letter of the 26th.

I had a letter from Mani yesterday. It appears she has an enlarged spleen. She is, therefore, under treatment for it and will take some time before she comes here. Budhabhai, Juthabhai and Bhagwanji at any rate will be there to run the Ashram as a Harijan colony. All three of them are honest, hard-working and efficient. We shall not have to pay anything to the first two.

Ramdas will settle down by and by. There is no cause for worry.

Anandi keeps fairly well. Prithuraj is in Calicut. Indu writes to me occasionally from Bhavnagar. . . .[2]

I hope you are well. I hope Chandubhai also is all right.

Lakshmi will probably go to Madras in a few days.

Blessings from
BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro–2: Sardar Vallabhbhaine, p. 31

[1] The addressee had gone to England in April to attend the meetings of the Joint Parliamentary Committee.

[2] Omission as in the source

48. LETTER TO MATHURADAS TRIKUMJI

September 30, 1933

The report about me which has appeared in papers is correct, and still not true. That is how a doctor would put it. But those who know about my health should not be alarmed by the report, for my blood-pressure used to remain higher there than it does here. No significance should be attached to increase or loss in weight in regard to my health. But now even the weight is not less than 101. I take sufficient rest.

[From Gujarati]

Bapuni Prasadi, p. 136

49. A NOTE[1]

WARDHA,
September 30, 1933

This money is to be sent to the Servants of Untouchables Society, Delhi, as contribution to the Harijan Fund.

M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 3071

50. VARNADHARMA OF THE FUTURE

A "Sanatani"[2] writes:[3]

It is difficult to give a straight answer to the question posed here. Only a prophet could do it. Others can only hazard a guess. For me, awareness of the present and conduct in accordance with it, are sufficient. Theists as well as atheists can

[1] This presumably is the note referred to by Gandhiji in "Letter to Amritlal V. Thakkar", p. 93.

[2] A pen name

[3] The letter is not translated here. The correspondent, referring to the article "To The Harijans of Gujarat" (*vide* Vol. LV, pp. 364-5) had expressed his doubts about the revival of varnadharma in its true spirit.

honestly sing: "Enjoy what you get today, for who knows about tomorrow?" Whereas the atheist's pleasure merely consists of eating, drinking and enjoying himself, the theist would be pleased to forget himself in devotion to the Lord, that is, in the duty which falls to his lot. I regard myself as a theist and find fulfilment in making the best of what I can do today. As we sow, so shall we reap, that is, the future will follow the present—that is a certainty. Hence, I am not worried about the future of varnadharma. I would also ask "Sanatani" not to worry about it. Those like me who believe in varnadharma and accept my definition of it should think and act accordingly, and they would be said to have observed their dharma in respect of varna.

Moreover, there is another thing which also deserves to be borne in mind. The basic tenets of any religion should be such as could be applied universally. Those which do not fulfil this condition cannot be regarded as the basic tenets. If varnadharma is not such a principle, it owes its origin to certain time, place and circumstances, and, if one of them should change, it must itself change. If the varna is a device which is so short-lived, no thought need be given to whether it should continue to exist or not. But I regard the varnadharma as defined by me as a universal principle. The existence of human society depends upon it. If my viewpoint is based on facts, varnadharma will certainly become universal in future, although it may then be called by some other name. Varnadharma implies that everyone must remain content with his hereditary means of livelihood. At the root of this scheme of things there is non-violence, the Divine Law, simple economics and human reason. If it is not followed, a civil war, the like of which has never been seen, is bound to overtake us. As millions of people awaken, they will all want to become rich, they will all want to attain greatness, no one will want to take up professions which are regarded as low and class feelings will intensify. I for one feel that this could lead to no result other than fratricidal conflicts.

However, as the instinct for self-preservation is ingrained in human nature, man will escape this fate by taking recourse to varnadharma. Everyone will live practising the profession to which he is born, without regarding any profession as high or low. In that case it would matter little if people were to be known not as Brahmins or Kshatriyas but by some other names. Instead of four, there may be only two varnas, or, even more than four. One thing is obvious—that by observing the great law of varna, we guard ourselves against conflicts arising out of capitalism,

communism, etc. In such a structure, there would not be, on the one hand, excessive greed, concentration of wealth or arrogance and, on the other, helplessness, destitution or poverty. All would live in harmony and no one would regard anyone else as high or low.

Having written this, let my fancy range a little farther. If anyone entrusted me with reconstructing a varna system and I happened to be in India, I would start with the Brahmins. If they become the custodians of knowledge derived from experience and of the code of conduct to be based on it, the other varnas would automatically fall into position. The Brahmins' knowledge being self-evident and themselves being free from selfish motives, others will readily follow them. Besides, they will also have the power to influence others. The question as to who should be called a Brahmin will not arise. The so-called Harijan of today may become a Brahmin respected by all and the so-called Brahmin may not shrink from calling himself a Shudra. I shall encounter no obstacle in this age of my fancy, because the feeling of 'high' and 'low' will then have been wholly uprooted and as all will be following their hereditary professions, they will soon take their own places. There is not much point in prolonging the flight of my fancy. Hence, I conclude after thus indicating the way. However, this article of mine should mean that, since varnadharma has been accepted as a non-violent institution, there is no room in it for penal measures or for the use of force. If varnadharma is ingrained in human nature, it will revive spontaneously. If it runs contrary to human nature, it is in the fitness of things that it has disappeared now. Here we are talking of man, not as a certain species of animals, but as one that is progressively shedding the animal qualities and who, having come out of his delusion, is directing all efforts towards the realization of *atman*. Man is an animal created to discover his *atman*, and as *atman* all men are one. Hence, at some time or the other, man will rid himself of the mire of high and low and, of his own accord, accept varnadharma which fosters unity.

[From Gujarati]

Harijanbandhu, 1-10-1933

51. LETTER TO PADMA

October 1, 1933

CHI. PADMA[1],

You will forgive me, won't you? Daily I wanted to write to you but could not for want of time. I hope you and Sarojinidevi[2] are all right now. Let me know your daily time-table of work. I will write more in reply to your next letter. Anandi, Babu, Bachu, Prabhavati, Mirabehn and Ba are with me.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 6144. Also C.W. 3499. Courtesy: Prabhudas Gandhi

52. LETTER TO SUDARSHAN V. DESAI

October 1, 1933

CHI. MAVO,

Are you as sweet as *mavo*[3] is? If not, be. Try every day to improve your handwriting. Are you very happy there?

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C.W. 5763. Courtesy: Valji G. Desai

[1] Daughter of Sitla Sahai, a Congress worker from U.P.
[2] Addressee's mother
[3] Dehydrated milk

53. LETTER TO DHIRU C. JOSHI

October 1, 1933

CHI. DHIRU,

I hope the fever has left you now. Spend the vacation there and rest. Gijubhai[1] says that you can stay there.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 5316

54. LETTER TO DUDHIBEHN V. DESAI

WARDHA,
October 1, 1933

CHI. DUDHIBEHN,

I often wanted to write to you but could get no time. It seems you feel quite at home there. I think Kusum's[2] dharma is, if she understands it, to stay in Ranavav and improve her health. I hope you are in the best of spirits. If there is anything interesting in Valji's letters, please let me know. I enclose letters for all, Kusum, Balbhadra[3], Indu, Nanu[4], Mavo[5] and Dhiru.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C.W. 7453. Courtesy: Valji G. Desai

[1] Gijubhai Badheka, author and educationist
[2] Kusum Gandhi, who suffered from tuberculosis
[3] Balbhadra N. Patel
[4] & [5] Addressee's sons Vimalchandra Desai and Sudarshan Desai

55. *LETTER TO D. B. KALELKAR*

October 1, 1933

CHI. KAKA,

I got your letter. You kept me waiting for a long time. I understand the reason now.

You need not get Jamnalalji's permission, since you are an inmate of the Ashram. . . .[1]

I have dispatched today to Ghanshyamdas the letter[2] regarding the handing over of the Ashram. Personally I liked your letter to Vallabhbhai.

Blessings from
BAPU

From the Gujarati original: C.W. 9479. Courtesy: D. B. Kalelkar

56. *LETTER TO JAISHREE RAIJI*

October 1, 1933

DEAR SISTER,

You have sought my blessings in the work that you have undertaken. You have them because it is no trouble giving blessings. You have not expressed a desire for anything more. Please do correct me if I am making a mistake in understanding you. And I shall certainly do whatever I can after you have put in plain words what you want.

Vandemataram from
MOHANDAS

From a facsimile of the Gujarati in *Bapujini Sheetal Chhayaman*, facing p. 8

[1] Some portion has been scored out here.
[2] *Vide* pp. 41-3.

57. LETTER TO F. MARY BARR

October 2, 1933

CHI. MARY,

Duncan brings me your and his love as I am walking on the terrace. I shall treasure that love. But I want you to be free from your weakness and be up and doing as early as possible. May God restore you soon. Of course I keep myself informed of your progress.

Love.

BAPU

From a photostat: G.N. 6006. Also C.W. 3332. Courtesy: F. Mary Barr

58. LETTER TO PREMLILA THACKERSEY

October 2, 1933

DEAR SISTER,

I got your letter. Mathuradas also says in his letter that you worry about me. But I am quite happy here. I eat with appetite, the weight is increasing and the blood-pressure is coming down. There is, therefore, no cause for worry, nor is it necessary to go to Mahabaleshwar. I don't think I would be able to do as much work there as I can here. Besides, I don't see any immediate need for incurring so much expenditure.

I hope your cold has left you completely.

Ba has gone to Nagpur today for khadi work.

My blessings to the girls.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C.W. 4833. Courtesy: Premlila Thackersey

59. LETTER TO C. F. ANDREWS

Unrevised

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM, WARDHA,
October 3, 1933

MY DEAR CHARLIE,

I have your letter.

I understand what you say about the better and responsive atmosphere in Orissa and I am glad of it. Thakkar Bapa cannot possibly go to Orissa at least just now, but the next best man will be there within a short time.

I corrected your use of the expression 'fast unto death', but I see that you have returned to it again. I told you that hitherto all my fasts have been conditional; even the last one[1] was conditional. I can well understand anybody being repelled by an unconditional fast unto death, though I have told you that in my scheme of life even an unconditional fast, under very extraordinary circumstances, has a place, but I don't need to argue out that extreme position. All I want to say is that in your discussion with Gurudev you should take care to avoid arguments around a 'fast unto death', taking the expression literally. Therefore, the best thing would be to centre your discussion around all my fasts which Gurudev has not been able to reconcile himself to, as perhaps the last one, and there too it would be one thing to say that the facts hitherto known will not justify the fast, and another thing to say that under no circumstances could a fast over the Harijan issue, such as I raised at Yeravda, be justified. I have before me a most painful but interesting case in which I have invited a worker to take a penitential fast for the sake of truth and honour. I have discussed it in the pages of the Gujarati *Harijan*.[2] You will find it also discussed in the English *Harijan* next week.[3]

I hope you are not overworking yourself. I am getting on famously. I wrote[4] to you day before yesterday setting you at ease over my prospective tour.

Love.

MOHAN

From a photostat: G.N. 3796

[1] From August 16 to 23; *vide* Vol. LV.

[2] & [3] *Vide* "A Case for Fasting", pp. 71-3.

[4] *Vide* p. 44.

60. LETTER TO J. C. KUMARAPPA

Unrevised *October 3, 1933*

MY DEAR KUMARAPPA,

Your letter has come exactly at the time I expected it. When you acknowledge this you must tell me all about your physical condition. You can come here whenever you like and can any time before the 23rd inst. I may begin the tour after that if the doctors give me a certificate of discharge.

I am doing a fair amount of work and seeing visitors at least for one hour during the day. This is always exceeded. Therefore, you need not worry and I know that you would not tax me.

I hope that your sister is bravely putting up the domestic sorrow that God has sent her. I have come to see that such sorrows are sometimes more real gifts from God than unbroken happiness which is dependent upon external circumstances.

Chandrashanker who is helping me wishes specially to be remembered to you. I expect Kakasaheb to be here any time during the week, and he may remain here a little while.

Love.

BAPU

SJT. J. C. KUMARAPPA
C/o C. V. NARASIAH, ESQ.
COIMBATORE (S. INDIA)

From a photostat: G.N. 10100

61. LETTER TO VALLABHBHAI PATEL

October 3, 1933

BHAI VALLABHBHAI,

I got your letter.

*   *   *[1]

You will read in one of the papers my letter[2] regarding the Ashram. If necessary, I will send Totaramji[3]. Parikshitlal also will stay there. There will be no difficulty.

I have written to Mani and told her that she should come here only after getting herself the right treatment.

. . .[4] will always go on like that. To try to reform him is like trying to straighten a dog's tail by tying it to a stone. You must have read the news about Krishna Nehru.

I wish to attend to some other work now, and so I will stop here today. Jamnalal, who is sitting near me, asks you not to worry about him. If necessary, he will go to a hill station. His weight has gone up to 190.

Blessings from

BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro–2: Sardar Vallabhbhaine, p. 32

[1] Omission as in the source

[2] *Vide* "Letter to G. D. Birla", pp. 41-3, which appeared in *Harijan*, 7-10-1933.

[3] Totaram Sanadhya, an Ashram inmate

[4] The name is omitted in the source.

62. *ADVICE TO JAPANESE BUDDHIST PRIESTS*[1]

October 4, 1933

I was glad to be able to see you and have interesting conversations. I have carefully gone through your long letter to me.

I can fully appreciate your desire to see that Buddhism is revived in India; only, I would like to point out to you that whatever Buddhism may mean, the substance of the teaching of Gautama, the Enlightened One, has been incorporated in Hinduism, and in my opinion, comparatively speaking, the purity of the teaching of that great reformer has been best preserved in India. In the countries of its adoption it has, as it seems to me, deteriorated: as for instance, Buddha's teaching essentially was not merely Brotherhood of Man but the Brotherhood of all Life. Nor is this to be wondered at. In my opinion, Buddha did not found a new religion. As a Hindu of Hindus, he gave a new orientation to Hinduism. I would, therefore, suggest to you that you should amplify your knowledge of that teaching by studying Sanskrit and Pali. A study of Sanskrit is necessary for knowing the setting in which the teaching was fitted and from which it was derived, and it is obvious that a study of Pali is necessary because the original scriptures are to be found in that language. And, since you have decided to cast in your lot with the Indian people, I would commend to your attention the necessity of learning Hindi or Hindustani.

Lastly, may I suggest to you that whatever religious revival may be necessary, it can only be done not by eloquence, not by learning, but by daily increase in the purity of one's life and a prayerful reliance upon the Great Intelligence, the Living Truth that animates, illumines and sustains the universe.

The Hindu, 12-10-1933

[1] Rev. Fuji and Rev. Okitsu met Gandhiji on October 4. A brief report of the interview appeared in *The Hindu*, 5-10-1933.

63. LETTER TO AMRITLAL V. THAKKAR

WARDHA,
October 6, 1933

BHAISHRI THAKKAR BAPA,

I got both your letters. I am glad you reminded me about Bidhan Roy. My memory seems to be slumbering. If you had not reminded me, I would have cleanly forgotten about the matter. Now a letter will go immediately tomorrow.

And now about the tour. Ghanshyamdas writes and tells me that I should not start before November 15. Dr. Khare[1] also has been insisting that I should take rest for at least six weeks. I, therefore, have agreed not to start before November 8. I will start on Wednesday, the 8th. This has satisfied Jamnalalji. I also feel that there will be no harm if I rest till the 8th. Meanwhile, I will be able to attend to some work which has been pending with me. I shall also have to think about the Harijan settlement. Then there is the problem of the workers in Ahmedabad, and some matters here, too, which require my attention. If, therefore, you think that this delay is justified, please make the necessary changes in the programme. Draw up the entire programme of the tour as follows. Let Jamnalalji draw up model programme for the Central Provinces in consultation with the local workers. Assign to the other provinces their respective weeks and ask them to draw up their own programmes. If this is done, it will not be necessary to make changes afterwards. When the programme is ready, we need not publish the whole programme for nine months at a time but publish in advance the programme for one province only, so that, if we find it necessary to make minor changes, there may be no difficulty. If we follow this method, we may publish the programme for just two provinces together and afterwards the programme for the next province as soon as we have finished one. This will also make the work easier. I will write more after Jamnalalji is ready with his suggestions.

And now about the Harijan settlement, namely, what name we should give to it. I feel that we should not use the word

[1] Dr. N. B. Khare

Harijan, but that our aim should be clear in the name that we select. Our ultimate aim is that we should stop using the name Harijan, or that all of us should become Harijans. Hence Vinoba has suggested the name Sarvodaya[1] Mandir, or Samabhava[2] Mandir. I naturally like the first name, for I called Ruskin's famous book[3] by the name Sarvodaya as far back as 20 years ago. That name, therefore, will include Harijans. Discuss the suggestion with Ghanshyamdas and let me know. Explain to him the other thing, too, which I have mentioned in this letter.

I am very happy that Bhai Babal[4] listened to your advice and mine. If he had not withdrawn his name, a very embarrassing situation would have arisen.

BAPU

[PS.]

We need not make any provision for Delhi, as we need not make any for Kathiawar. I had heard all about Shrivastavaji's performance long ago. But to whom can we complain when our own people turn against us?

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 1124

64. LETTER TO MANEKLAL

October 6, 1933

CHI. MANEKLAL,

You did well in writing to me. What is your present job? What is your pay? The other things you will know from my letter to Radha.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./XXIII, 369

[1] Welfare of all
[2] Equality of all
[3] *Unto This Last*; *vide* Vol. VIII.
[4] Babalbhai Mehta

65. *LETTER TO RADHA GANDHI*

October 6, 1933

CHI. RADHA,

I plead guilty. I remain so busy that sometimes I forget the dear ones like you and leave them without [letters]. I remember you all but writing letters to you continues to be postponed on and on. I am content to know that you are all happy and find pleasure in your own respective fields. I would only hope you served as much as you can and bless you for a long life. Whether I write or not I do like your writing to me. I see your face always before me. I am all right. Ba is here. Ramdas and his wife are also here. Devdas is in jail.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./XXIII

66. *NOTES*

How to Collect Funds

Many workers of institutions think that they can get funds for their institutions for the mere issuing of appeals. But that is true only of very few well-known and tried workers. A Muller or a Ramakrishna has been known to get funds even for the silent praying. Mere mute wishes of such rare saints reach people like irresistible wireless messages. But the majority have to plod before they can get any response. And the best way of plodding is to pay house-to-house visits. When a cause is just, as ours undoubtedly is, and the worker is known for his or her integrity, response is assured. Such house-to-house begging is also the best propaganda. Donors are, and should be, always exacting. They want to know, or ought to want to know, all the needs of the institution they are called upon to support. Therefore, workers who go on begging expeditions have to be well armed with facts and figures. What is, however, most needed is patience. They must be prepared even to put up with insults. In the end they will find that

funds cause the least difficulty when honesty and ability are assured. In the absence of these two qualities, funds are a burden as we find today regarding many so-called religious institutions which are decaying, though they have ample funds.

Unscrupulous and indolent trustees are ill able to discharge their trust, and the moneys in their hands are either locked up profitlessly or wasted on irreligious orgies or other superstitious practices.

A Suggestion from America

An American friend, who knows Indian conditions somewhat and is deeply interested in Harijan work, writes in reply to a letter from me:[1]

> . . . I feel that where there is room the reports would be more effective if, in addition to telling what has been done, they would also compare it with the previous conditions. . . . Also to tell the approximate number of Harijans in each such locality, so as to show how many people the new facilities will serve and how adequate or inadequate even the improvement is. Also to contrast it with corresponding facilities for upper caste people in the same place. . . .

The underlying note of the American friend's suggestion is a plea for more truth. The reports of our work can never be too accurate. They must be mirrors both of our strength and our weakness. We may not, therefore, embellish them. Too often reports are made attractive by rosy pictures of institutions to which they refer. But not being true to life, they share the fate of ordinary newspaper paragraphs or advertisements. Readers simply do not read them or, when they do, they distrust them. Comparative statements, such as the writer suggests, will better enable the reader to grasp the meaning of figures and facts. Reports should never contain declamations or writers' opinions, except when the latter are relevant. They should be brief and to the point. When there is no apparent progress, workers very often say they have nothing to report. Such men forget that what is wanted is a truthful record of their activities. If, therefore, systematic work has been done, a correct record of it cannot fail to be of great value to other workers. We may not always command success, but we can always show increasing effort and concentration, which are forerunners of success.

[1] Only extracts from the letter are reproduced here.

VALUE OF REPORTS

Thakkar Bapa has often complained to me that the various organizations do not send prompt periodical reports and those that are sent often contain opinions and declamations rather than facts and figures. Secretaries and workers do not always realize that reports are required, not for the pleasure of the central organization, but for the guidance of the centre in framing its policy from day to day, for checking and co-ordinating the work of the different organizations and for informing the public from time to time of the progress of the movement. The duty, faithfully performed, of drawing up reports will automatically stimulate the activity of workers all round, and keep organizations up to the mark. Thus, if all workers sent in their reports of work done on the Harijan Day (24th September last), it would be possible to have an idea of the successes and failures in the various provinces. It would also be possible then to know what instructions to issue for the next Harijan Day. I hope, therefore, that, if such reports have not already been, they will be, sent at once to the headquarters in Delhi. And if any reader has anything striking to report about his experiences, I would ask him to send them directly to me. I hope that all the reports would contain accurate account of takings and expenditure incurred in making preparations for the observance of the Day.

Harijan, 7-10-1933

67. *WHAT THEY BELIEVE*

Rao Bahadur M. C. Rajah sent me some time ago a copy of his speech, delivered at the Legislative Assembly on 24th August last, in connection with the Temple-entry Bill[1]. The reader will find below copious extracts[2] from that speech, with interruptions, his repartees and some other non-historical portions omitted.

The value of the speech consists, not so much in the accuracy of his historical statements, as in the fact that many people actually believe in them with as much tenacity as the so-called sanatanists, who credit Harijans with hardly any human rights, believe in statements supporting untouchability. The issue will ultimately be decided, not by historical evidence or by interpretation of Sanskrit texts of doubtful religious value, but by the

[1] Introduced by Ranga Iyer; *vide* Vol. LIII.
[2] Not reproduced here

prayerful and incessant labours of reformers of sinless purity. No religion has ever lived on its past achievements. It dies unless it is nourished and sustained by the continuing *tapas*[1] of its votaries. Not by learning but by right conduct can religions flourish. Untouchability, as we practise it today, crept in when watchfulness of pure custodians waned. It will only go when an unbroken and unbreakable chain of continuing *tapas* is established. Not even a unanimous verdict of all the pundits and *shastris* will remove the idea of high and low which has been dragged into the minds of the masses since generations past. The latter will want the evidence of the practice of those whom they believe to be pure-minded representatives of their religion.

Nevertheless, I commend Rao Bahadur Rajah's speech to the students of Hinduism from the historical standpoint. It is of some importance to have it indubitably proved that the Harijans of the South, at any rate, represented a civilization which was destroyed by a conquering race, calling itself Aryan (noble) in contempt of the original inhabitants, whom it used for its own selfish ends and reduced to slavery. I must confess that I have always entertained grave doubts as to the truth of the story. I should refuse to credit such claimants of superiority with being repositories of a noble religion. If the historical evidence is beyond question, one is forced to the conclusion that all that is noble in Hinduism came, not from the conquerors, but from the conquered and that untouchability is a corruption which the conquerors superimposed upon it, whilst they adopted the religion and culture of the conquered. Whichever way the truth lies between the two schools of thought, untouchability is a recognized evil that has to be removed if Hinduism is to live. It is further clear that, according to the two schools, Hinduism, whether it is indigenous or imported, did not, in its original state, have any taint of untouchability about it. And in any case, now that there is no distinction between the non-Aryan and the Aryan, who is said to have come from outside India and has fused with the original inhabitants of the country, it is not of much, if any, practical importance to decide or even know who was truly *Arya* or noble. What is of tremendous importance is the fact that the monster of untouchability will tax the resources of all Hindus before it receives its death-blow.

Harijan, 7-10-1933

[1] Austere effort

68. LETTER TO KRISHNA NEHRU

[*October 7, 1933*][1]

CHI. KRISHNA,

You are now going to be reborn, for marriage is a sort of rebirth, is it not?

Swarup[2] came as a bride to Kathiawar but persuaded her husband to go and settle down in her old province—U.P. Ranjit claims to be a Kathiawari as well as a Maharashtrian. Gunottam is only a Gujarati, and I do not think you will try to take him away to Allahabad. You will have to make Gujarat your home, or maybe Bombay. My only wish is that wherever you are, may you be happy and add lustre to the already bright name of your illustrious parents. May God help you and Gunottam. I am unable to attend your marriage, so I shall have to content myself with sending you my blessings.

Blessings from
BAPU

[From Hindi]
Koi Shikayat Nahin, pp. 113-4

69. LETTER TO JAWAHARLAL NEHRU

October 7, 1933

MY DEAR JAWAHARLAL,

I have your two letters. The first did not call for a reply.

I see that Krishna's marriage comes off on 20th inst. I am glad. I must not attempt to come to Allahabad. It is much better for me to remain in the *purdah* till the medical men declare me to be quite fit. Herewith a letter[3] for Krishna.

I see Mother is not yet quite out of the wood. Let us hope she will be fit enough to attend the wedding.

[1] *Vide* the following item.
[2] Vijayalakshmi Pandit, addressee's elder sister
[3] *Vide* the preceding item.

Your article[1] for the D. H. I like very much. I am sending it to Agatha for such use as she can make of it. She is a wonderful worker.

Mira had forgotten all about the note of her prison experiences. Her draft is now ready. It will be sent to you to be handed to Andrews and such other use that you may wish.

I am thinking out what is possible to do for the workers.

What is this I read about Tandon's differences? Have you seen the paragraph?

Love.

BAPU

Gandhi-Nehru Papers, 1933. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

70. LETTER TO MANIBEHN PATEL

WARDHA,
October 7, 1933

CHI. MANI,

I have your letter. See all the people whom you wish to see and then come. But please do not take this to mean that you may come in the next millennium. Do bring along Baba[2]. He will like this place. I am improving, that is, regaining my strength. I shall be here till November 7.

Blessings from
BAPU

SHRIMATI MANIBEHN PATEL
RAMNIVAS, PAREKH STREET
BOMBAY 4

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro–4 : Manibehn Patelne, p. 109

[1] This is not available.
[2] Dahyabhai Patel's son

71. *LETTER TO JIVANJI D. DESAI*

October 7, 1933

BHAISHRI JIVANJI,

I got both your letters. I had read your notice. It is all right. Arrange to send Bablo here after Diwali. He has promised to come. He has, therefore, bound himself. I hope he will keep his promise. I have not received the list yet.

Blessings from
BAPU

[PS.]

I will write the preface[1] to 'Varnadharma' as early as I can.

SJT. JIVANJI DESAI
NAVAJIVAN PRAKASHAN MANDIR
GANDHI ROAD
AHMEDABAD, B.B.&.C.I.RLY.

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 9931. Also C.W. 6906. Courtesy: Jivanji D. Desai

72. *SURRENDER OF THE ASHRAM*[2]

[Before *October 8, 1933*][3]

We have given up the trusteeship [of the Ashram]. We have given it up not out of rancour but out of a feeling of oneness with it, because we saw that while keeping it under our control we could not observe our dharma. The Government may take it over, but are not doing so. I do not want it to be ruined. ... Giving up control of the Ashram does not mean that we would never be staying there. I do hope we could stay there. Even if the Government sells it away, I hope that the inmates of the Ashram would settle nowhere but on that land. . . . May it become a place of pilgrimage for Harijans. May it be for them a

[1] A collection of Gandhiji's views published under the title *Varnavyavastha*. For the preface, *vide* Vol. LIX.

[2]&[3] This and the following three items have been translated from Chandrashankar Shukla's weekly letter.

temple. May it also be a place which would remind the caste Hindus of their own dharma. The caste Hindus should know that they have reason for atonement and that this will also mean service to themselves.

[From Gujarati]

Harijanbandhu, 8-10-1933

73. *DISCUSSION ON DANGER OF CIVIL STRIFE*

[Before *October 8, 1933*]

Q. Do you think this problem is so important that it must be tackled just now? Many people are afraid that this work will lead to fighting and civil strife among Hindus.

A. Without doing this work we cannot reach the road to swaraj. And even supposing we did, that swaraj would not be true swaraj, but the reign of blind superstition and irreligion. Today many Hindus believe that Hinduism would perish with the eradication of untouchability. But I see the end of Hinduism unless untouchability is wiped out. In this age people do not fight with swords for the sake of religion. Religious awakening is not and should not be brought about nor religion protected at the point of the sword. But religions will be compared and judged by our reasons and hearts. Untouchability is opposed to reason and sentiment. It is a great crime. As Congressmen we must accept this. If in consequence only a handful of Hindus remain in the Congress, let it be so. The Congress will then become a powerful organization. Today there is only a risk of civil strife. If, however, untouchability is not wiped out, civil strife is a certainty. Unless we take bold measures against untouchability, civil strife is bound to follow.

[From Gujarati]

Harijanbandhu, 8-10-1933

74. TALK WITH A WORKER[1]

[Before *October 8, 1933*]

Q. Since removal of untouchability is included in the Congress programme, why should we not do this work as a political activity?

A. The movement will fizzle out if it is carried on as a political activity. It has political implications, and nobody can prevent them from following. But the work itself cannot be considered a political acitivity. If it is so considered, it will not last, for, it is a pure religious cause. Hence, to those who suggest that it should be restricted to a purely political aim and that such a difficult item like temple-entry should be omitted from the programme, I would say that if this is done, the movement will lose its very life.

[From Gujarati]

Harijanbandhu, 8-10-1933

75. TALK ON NEED FOR HUMILITY

[Before *October 8, 1933*]

After taking a vow, do not start soaring in the sky but remain on the earth. We are but grains of sand, we are like particles of dust. I truly believe the saying, "For dust thou art, and unto dust shalt thou return." We are born out of dust, we are mere images of clay. What should we be proud of? We are not capable even of building anything like the artistic ant-hill that ants can build. Sparrows, ants, etc., have attained perfection, which we have not. We are imperfect. We are not perfect even physically. That is why we seek perfection elsewhere. We are never content to be what we are. This "divine discontent" is put in us by God. Because of it, we keep on saying "not this, not this", and endeavour to go further and further. An ant is perfect, because it does not wish to become better. But we have got to progress. We should, therefore, be humble and live as particles of dust, be ciphers. Modern physicists and astronomers tell us that each atom contains the entire universe within

[1] This appeared under the title "Purely Religious Work".

itself. The seers of the Upanishads had known this truth thousands of years ago. That is why they said: "As in the individual so in the universe." We can become part of the Divine when we become like an atom, become a mere cipher, for the atom is universal, imperishable. We must, therefore, learn not to soar in the sky, but to become like a particle of dust.

[From Gujarati]

Harijanbandhu, 8-10-1933

76. *ANSWERS TO CORRESPONDENTS*[1]

[Before *October 8, 1933*]

I believe in the system of the four varnas.[2] But the aim of the varna system was to determine and limit the field of occupations. Restrictions about marriage and dining were never regarded as part of the varnadharma. Ordinarily, people will naturally marry within their own varna but we know from historical evidence that there have always been inter-varna marriages in certain circumstances. I have gradually come to the firm conclusion that as a result of complete confusion in the matter of the choice of occupations there is a total chaos in the functioning of the varna system as well. Today varnadharma exists only in name; the beautiful varna system has been abused to spread the degrading notion of high and low. I have no ready solution to the problem how true varnadharma can be established. But I have no doubt at all that its revival will depend on the present generation following the right path. Its outward form will perhaps have changed a little. In religious matters it should be remembered that we have to seek the spirit behind the outward form, that mere form without spirit is of no use.

Thank you for your frank letter.[3] No person can absolve another from the moral consequences of breach of vow. God

[1] The report, which appeared under the title "From the Mail Bag", gives only a gist of Gandhiji's answers to the correspondents.

[2] A gentleman had asked why, since Gandhiji believed in the system of the four varnas, he approved of inter-varna marriages.

[3] This was in reply to a student from Poona who had obtained Gandhiji's autograph by promising that he would spin for half an hour daily, but had subsequently written to Gandhiji saying that he could not keep his promise and requested him to absolve him from it. He had also offered to return the autograph. *Vide* Vol. LV, "Advice to a Student", p. 419.

alone can do that. But I do not know that God does. However, I can understand your difficulty. But I hope you will wear khadi as far as possible. You need not return the autograph.

(1) God is Truth.[1]

(2) Hence, for realizing God one should follow truth in thought, word and deed.

(3) Constant repetition of Ramanama from the heart is a sure means of realizing the self.

(4) Realization of self means realization of Truth.

Where there is a clash between sanatanists and Harijans, we should do our best to pacify the parties. We cannot accept foreign cloth, etc., that may be offered as gifts for Harijans.[2]

The ethical principles which you have explained to the *muni* seem all right.[3] If, however, he does not feel a spontaneous call from within and depends on my advice, my duty is to dissuade him from giving up his holy dress. For, the fault is not in the dress itself but in its abuse. The *muni* can render great service by becoming a perfect scholar and fearlessly pointing out the path of dharma and following it himself. He should strive hard and make a deep study of Sanskrit and Magadhi. This is the primary duty of those who accept the holy dress of a Jain *muni*, but few of them do it. They must emphatically tell the people that untouchability and the present-day varnadharma have no place in Jainism, after first convincing themselves about it. There is no restriction on a Jain *muni* teaching anybody. Hence, he should gather at least a few Harijan children and teach them. If they are convinced that Jainism is not different from Hinduism, they should explain that to the people. If in consequence they have to face boycott, they should do so with love and continue their service. I think this fully answers your question.

I see that you have become impatient.[4] There is nothing wrong in being impatient in a good cause. Your ambition is good; I should like you to give it another and a better direction. I have always believed that young people wrongly entertain the ambition of going to England for study. It is a very expensive

[1] This and the following three replies are to questions about methods of realizing God.

[2] This was addressed to a "Worker".

[3] This was in reply to a common friend who had sought Gandhiji's advice on behalf of a Jain monk who wished to give up his holy dress which he regarded as an obstacle to public service.

[4] This was in reply to a Harijan teacher's request for help from the Harijan Sevak Sangh to enable him to go abroad for advanced studies.

hobby. It is possible to have in India most of what you can get in England. I believe that it is wrong for us to entertain an ambition which only a handful of persons can realize. If anybody does want to realize such an ambition, he should do it with his own resources, not with the aid of a public organization or even with private help. If you do depend on outside help, you should ask for such help as others also in your position would be able to get.

As far as I can see, your aim in going to England is to earn more so that you can give more money for Harijan work. But you will have to admit that, no matter how much you give, your contribution will be a mere drop in the ocean. Hence, instead of following the tortuous path of earning more in order to give more, why should you not adopt a better way? That way is to dedicate yourself to Harijan work. That would not be like a drop in the ocean, but it would be a glowing example for countless others to follow. I want to impress upon you that education of the heart is infinitely more important than education of the head. And education of the heart can be had here in the same measure as anywhere else in the world. Moreover, it will cost you nothing.

[From Gujarati]
Harijanbandhu, 8-10-1933

77. SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM IN NEW FORM[1]

The responsibility of the caste Hindus of Ahmedabad as also of the Harijans has increased as a result of the donation of the land and buildings of the Satyagraha Ashram for the service of Harijans. Very few institutions own so many buildings and so much land; I do not know of any Harijan institution as big as this one. However, land and buildings without men are no better than ruins. They have no independent value of their own. The big place is not going to justify itself if just any Harijans go and live there, nor is the object behind it going to be fulfilled. The Ashram can become an ideal institution and a place of pilgrimage only when worthy Harijans live there observing all the rules, and caste Hindus take interest in their progress, devoting their time and applying their talents, etc., to it. It is obvious that the caste Hindus and Harijans living in and around Ahmedabad alone can do all this. I hope both will do their duty.

[From Gujarati]
Harijanbandhu, 8-10-1933

[1] This appeared under "Notes".

78. *A CASE FOR FASTING*[1]

One who describes himself as a Harijan worker writes a long letter of which I give the following substance:

> With the Chairman of the local Harijan Seva Sangh and a sister I went the other day to a village. We were in a bullock-cart. On the way the Chairman and the sister were engaged in conversation exchanging jokes. The sister seemed to be fatigued and lay in the Chairman's lap. This familiarity somewhat startled me. On returning we were to take the train to the city from which we had started. We had to wait for a few hours at the station. The Chairman and the sister occupied a bench. I sat on the platform ground. It was a moonlight night. I had a mind to test them, for I thought that there was something wrong with them. I, therefore, pretended that I would sleep and told the Chairman: 'We have yet to wait for some time. If you don't mind I would sleep for a while. I am tired. Will you wake me up when the train arrives?' Hearing this, the Chairman seemed to be delighted over my proposal and he readily permitted me to sleep. I lay down and pretended that I was in deep sleep. In order to make sure that I was asleep he called out. Not having any response from me he felt free to take what liberties he liked with the sister. They quietly went into a cluster of trees near by. After some time they returned and when the time for the train drew near, he woke me up. I did not like this indecency between the Chairman and the sister. I recalled your 21 days' fast and the reasons which you had given for it. I took some of the co-workers into confidence. They tackled the Chairman, but he put on a bold front and not only denied the charge of indecency but charged me with jealousy and designs upon the Chairmanship of the local organization. What am I to do in the circumstance?

I have omitted unnecessary details from the letter. Let not the reader try to guess the names of the actors and the scene of the tragedy. Idle curiosity should be avoided. I am drawing public

[1] The Gujarati original appeared in *Harijanbandhu*, 8-10-1933.

attention to my correspondent's letter to serve as a warning to all Harijan workers. Let us, therefore, examine it.

In the first instance, the correspondent did wrong in wishing to test his companions and exposing them to temptation. It is always a bad business to become detectives over co-workers; and if, without wishing it, we discover any moral or other lapses on their part, our business should be not to gossip about them, but immediately to draw, in a gentle manner, the companions' attention to them. Had my correspondent, when he first scented danger, put the Chairman on his guard, he would have saved him from the lapse, assuming, of course, that the correspondent has given a true version of the tragedy. But, instead of taking the straight course, he adopted the crooked course of testing the couple. We are all fallible human beings ever exposed to temptations. Fortunately for us, 'there's many a slip 'twixt the cup and the lip'. Very few are saved from succumbing to temptations, if there is no external interruption. There is no certainty that the correspondent himself, exposed to the same temptation, might not have fallen as the Chairman is said by him to have fallen. Indeed, had he been a little thoughtful, a little considerate towards his companions, he could have prevented their complete fall, by giving up the pretence of sleeping and gently pulling them up. I know cases in which such warnings have proved the saving of people. Thus, it seems to me that this Harijan worker signally failed in his duty towards his friends and fellow-workers. He has, however, asked the question, what he could do. I do not propose to answer the question from his standpoint. Evidently he is anxious to know, not how the parties can be brought to repentance, but how they can be exposed, and the charges against him disproved. It is none of his business to expose his companions, as it was none of his business to tempt them to fall, but his business now is undoubtedly to give a private notice to the Chairman that he would have to undertake a fast till the Chairman confesses his guilt, or, if that is beyond his capacity, to undertake a fairly prolonged fast, so as to bring home the guilt to the parties. Such a fast cannot be taken publicly. It is highly likely that the Chairman and the sister will realize the grievousness of their guilt, but it is not at all unlikely that they might harden their hearts and ignore the fast. That ought not to be a matter of any concern for my correspondent. He will have done his penance for having made himself a detective over his friend and it will be some relief to him from the oppression of the charge brought against him of jealousy and ambition to

become the Chairman of the local Seva Sangh. It is hardly necessary to emphasize the obvious truth that the fast, if it is at all taken, should be taken only if the Harijan worker believes in its necessity and efficacy and if he can take it with a clean heart.

It may be that the parties charged by my correspondent have not erred. Let us hope that they have not. But I know that such errors have occurred before now. Let the incident described here serve as a warning to all workers. It furnishes, in my opinion, a clear case for fasting. Harijan service is no sinecure; it is a movement for bringing about a revolutionary change in the mentality of millions of human beings. It is like walking on the edge of a sword and, therefore, requires the greatest vigilance over self on the part of the workers.

Harijan, 27-10-1933

79. PREFACE TO "GITAPRAVESHIKA"[1]

WARDHA,
October 8, 1933

This selection[2] of *shlokas* for the *Gitapraveshika* was made last year (1932) in Yeravda Mandir. My third son Ramdas was in the same jail. The authorities permitted me to meet or write to him occasionally. Ramdas used to read the *Gita* but could not understand it fully. Ramdas does not lack *bhaktibhava*[3]; he has the *shraddha*[4] too. I selected simple and devotional verses from the *Gita* and sent them over to him so as to help him. Ramdas liked the collection. I further encouraged him by calling the selection "Ramagita"[5].

Baba Raghavdas[6] happened to see the collection when it was with Kakasaheb; he went through it and felt it would prove useful to Harijan workers. With that in view he asked for my

[1] The original in Hindi, published with the text by the Calcutta Shuddha Khadi Bhandar, is not available.

[2] In the following order: VI. 5, 6, 14, 29 to 32 and 47; VII. 7 and 10; VIII. 14; IX. 22, 26, 27, 29 to 31, and 34; X. 8 to 10; XI. 53 to 55; XII. 15; XIII. 27; XVIII. 46, 61, 62, 66, 78; XI. 15, 16, 18 to 20, 38 to 40, 43 and 44

[3] Attitude of devotion

[4] Faith

[5] *Vide* Vol. LI, pp. 372-4.

[6] A *kisan* leader of U.P.

permission to have it published. Being no pundit myself I could not decide if the collection was worthy of publication. Sjt. Vinoba, Kakasaheb and Balakrishna[1] of the Ashram were all here. All the three are devoted students of the *Gita*. I told the Baba that I had no objection to the collection being published provided the three Ashram inmates approved of it. All the three had consultation among themselves and advised me, with a view to increasing its utility, to omit three of the verses and to add four new ones. The collection thus revised is now presented to men and women workers as well as to other lovers of the *Gita*. I hope—and it is also my intention —that the collection will be read as an introduction and nothing more and that a study of the *Gita* as a whole will be undertaken only after it had been fairly digested. All the same it should be remembered that merely memorizing or knowing the meaning of the *Praveshika* or [even] the whole of the *Gita* is not going to help realize the *atman*. The *Gita* is to be put into practice. When one has knowledge of its technical phraseology and has taken to heart its central idea of non-attachment, it becomes easier to understand the *Gita*.

[From Gujarati]

Harijanbandhu, 9-9-1934

80. LETTER TO AMRITLAL V. THAKKAR

Unrevised *October 8, 1933*

DEAR THAKKAR BAPA,

I have your letter about the amounts of Harijan fund received by me. I have the account from Mathuradas. I am simply waiting for Chimanlal who is expected to reach here shortly. As soon as he comes I shall attend to the matter.

I have also your letter about the tour. Your second letter has crossed mine. I am quite clear in my mind that the whole of the Central Provinces should be finished at once. I do not mind the cold weather of the Punjab. Therefore it does not matter where I am during the cold weather. Nor do I mind the hot weather. What you have to guard against is the rainy season. Therefore, June and July should be given to those provinces where the rains do not set in early.

[1] Vinoba Bhave's younger brother

I was considerably relieved as you must have been to find Bakhale withdrawing from the Municipal contest. We will now discuss with Mr. Kodanda Rao the principle underlying the advice that you and I tendered. I have told him that I would welcome the discussion.

BAPU

SJT. AMRITLAL V. THAKKAR
GENERAL SECRETARY, S.U.S.
BIRLA MILLS, DELHI

From a photostat: G.N. 1125

81. LETTER TO G. D. BIRLA

October 8, 1933

MY DEAR GHANSHYAMDAS,

I have your letter[1].

The difficulty you raise is there and it was in anticipation of it that I suggested the formation of a trust board. My idea is that the property should be held by these trustees permanently, under very defined conditions, with the right even to sell. You and Thakkar Bapa should be permanent members, irrespective of what happens to the popular organization. This proposal disposes of the question from which has arisen the larger one that I am not prepared to discuss in this letter for want of time. Meanwhile I would ask you to study the constitution of the All-India Spinners' Association. We may postpone the discussion till we meet, and, seeing that I am here up to the 7th of November, it might be possible for you to come, even if it be for that one question.

You have referred to the proposed hostel in Delhi. In view of our possessing the Ashram ground and buildings, do you think there is any urgency for the Delhi proposal? Should we not wait and see how the Sabarmati plan progresses before venturing upon

[1] Dated October 5, which, *inter alia*, read: So far we have no property. But by the acceptance of your offer we will shortly be in possession of a valuable property. The question will thus immediately arise as to who will be the owner of this property. Will it be the Harijan Mandal? If so, then the Harijan Mandal would for all practical purposes mean the persons by whose sufferance it exists and there is no such thing as sufferance in our Society so far. Therefore, we have to decide what sort of constitution we are to have in future.

another big scheme? I am inclined to think that we ought to concentrate our attention upon making the Sabarmati scheme a thorough success and it will tax the energy of many of us to make it so.

I hope you are keeping well. What about the nose? Weather in Delhi ought to be very fine at this time of the year.

BAPU

C.W. 7938 and 7939. Courtesy: G. D. Birla. Also *In the Shadow of the Mahatma*, pp. 126-7

82. LETTER TO G. D. BIRLA

October 8, 1933

BHAI GHANSHYAMDAS,

Gopi is doing quite well. She is cheerful. I have written to Gajanan.

Blessings from
BAPU

From the Hindi original: C.W. 7939. Courtesy: G. D. Birla

83. SPEECH AT PUBLIC MEETING, WARDHA[1]

October 8, 1933

Till yesterday I had no idea that I would have to face a large assembly like this, nor did I imagine that I would have to make a speech. I cannot speak very loudly. Doctor friends have advised me not to try it. That is why I have jotted down a few points. You are aware that till the 3rd of August next year I wish to engage myself mainly in Harijan work. I have tried to study Hinduism since my youth and have endeavoured to shape my conduct according to what I was taught in my childhood. I have studied the Hindu scriptures to the best of my ability. I have studied the sacred books of other religions also with reverence. Right from my childhood I have believed that untouchability as we know it today has no place in Hinduism and that it is a

[1] Owing to his weak state of health Gandhiji himself did not speak. The speech, which was in Hindi, was read out at the meeting. No Hindi report being available, this has been translated from Chandrashankar Shukla's weekly letter.

great evil which has somehow entered it. Study and experience have confirmed me in this view. I am convinced that Hinduism will perish if we do not get rid of this evil of untouchability.

Removal of untouchability does not mean merely that we should touch the people whom we regard as untouchables. Of course we should touch them, whenever necessary, with love. But removal of untouchability means much more than that. It means that we should give up the feeling of high and low. In a sense the feeling of high and low is found prevailing in all countries. But it cannot be said that this feeling is part of any religion. It is asserted that it is part of Hinduism; but if we examine objectively the fundamental principles of Hinduism, we can see that it too does not sanction such a feeling. It is true, of course, that our daily conduct is strongly influenced by this notion, and we have been taught to believe that it is a special feature of Hinduism. One of the principles of Hinduism is that we should not do to others what we would not like to be done to ourselves. In another verse having the same meaning, it is stated that we should regard all living creatures as we regard ourselves. How the feeling of high and low crept into such a religion is beyond my understanding.

In other words, it is the duty of every Hindu to fulfil completely the pledge that the leaders had taken on behalf of the Hindu community on 25th[1] September last year at a meeting in Bombay presided over by Malaviyaji Maharaj. I hope that all of you who have come here will keep that pledge. It was categorically stated in that Resolution that the Harijans have the same right as the other Hindus to the use of public temples, public wells and public schools. When vast numbers of caste Hindus undergo change of heart and we fully appreciate and follow the dharma of compassion, not only will there be unity between them and Harijans but we shall also live in amity with followers of other faiths and the present antagonisms will completely disappear. I pray to God that He grant us enough strength to purify ourselves thus and that the evil of untouchability that has crept into Hinduism be completely abolished.

[From Gujarati]

Harijanbandhu, 15-10-1933

[1] The source has "24th". The resolution drafted by Gandhiji and agreed upon by other leaders at Poona on September 24, 1932, was formally adopted at Bombay the following day. *Vide* Vol. LI, p. 139.

84. LETTER TO VALLABHBHAI PATEL

[Before *October 9, 1933*][1]

BHAISHRI VALLABHBHAI,

I got your letter only today. You will know from the papers that my work is increasing. The blood-pressure has come down. It remains 160-100. And the weight has gone up to 103 pounds.

Raja is in Coimbatore. He keeps fairly good health. Lakshmi left on Saturday. Krishnadas[2] has accompanied her. While in Madras, he will inspect the khadi work there. Lakshmi will pay a visit to Coimbatore. Devdas writes to me regularly. He seems to be doing well. He does some reading.

Krishna (Nehru) will be married to Gunottam Hutheesing on the 20th in Allahabad. I am not attending the wedding. They don't expect me to do so, either. I have already written a letter giving my blessings. You also should write.

Kishorelal will come here in two or three days.

Jamnalalji is of the opinion that Anandi should be betrothed. I also feel that that should be done. . . .[3] She says, however, that she does not wish to get married just now. But I think she will marry if I advise her to do so. Let me have your views. If you can, see Lakshmidas and ask him his views. I am writing to him.

. . .[4] I have already written to Mani. Perhaps she may not come even with Mridu[5].

Jamnalal is going to Bombay today for two or three days for private work.

My tour will probably commence on November 8. I shall probably be accompanied by Thakkar Bapa, Chandrashankar, Mira, Nayar, and Ramnarayan Choudhri.

Blessings to you and Chandubhai from

BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro–2: Sardar Vallabhbhaine, pp. 33-4

[1] The date has been inferred from the reference to Krishna Nehru's marriage and Jamnalal's visit to Bombay; *vide* pp. 79-80.

[2] Chhaganlal Gandhi's son

[3] & [4] Omissions as in the source

[5] Mridula Sarabhai

85. TELEGRAM TO JAWAHARLAL NEHRU

WARDHA,
October 9, 1933

JAWAHARLAL NEHRU
ANAND BHAWAN, ALLAHABAD

THANK GOD. HOPE MOTHER WILL BE WELL ENOUGH ATTEND FORTHCOMING WEDDING IN GOOD HEALTH.

BAPU

Gandhi-Nehru Papers, 1933. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

86. LETTER TO JAWAHARLAL NEHRU

WARDHA,
October 9, 1933

MY DEAR JAWAHARLAL,

I had your wire to which I sent a reply in the afternoon. I do hope Mother will be strong enough to attend to the wedding.

I got today the accompanying from Saraladevi[1]. I have told her Indu[2] is left free to do as she chooses and that she is not likely to entertain any marriage proposal as she is still studying. I have told her too that I am forwarding the letter to you. If Indu was at all prepared to consider a marriage proposal, I do regard Dipak[3] to be a good match.

Hardikar[4] and Kamala Chattopadhyay came in today. Hardikar is suffering from fistula and would need an operation. I shall know more tomorrow. Jamnalalji has gone to Bombay for helping a friend who is in financial trouble. He will be back in four days.

My tour commences on 8th November, all being otherwise well. I am having fair rest.

Kamala never writes nowadays.

[1] Saraladevi Chowdharani

[2] Indira Nehru, addressee's daughter

[3] Son of Saraladevi Chowdharani

[4] N. S. Hardikar, founder and Secretary-General of the Hindustani Seva Dal

Love.

BAPU

Gandhi-Nehru Papers, 1933. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

87. LETTER TO F. MARY BARR

October 9, 1933

CHI. MARY,

I had full report yesterday of your misbehaviour. The doctors say you have a spleen. It points to a diet of milk and fruit and greens. You are doomed to a course of quinine pills. I trust you will be all right again in a day or two.

The Swami's name is Shri Kuvalayanand, Santa Cruz, Bombay.

Love.

BAPU

From a photostat: G.N. 6009. Also C.W. 3336. Courtesy: F. Mary Barr

88. LETTER TO J. C. KUMARAPPA

October 10, 1933

MY DEAR KUMARAPPA,

I have your letter.

Of course, you will take your time and put the affairs of your sister in good order. I am here till the 7th of November. You have, therefore, ample time.

Veena is expecting you in Ahmedabad so as to be able to give you the treatment that you will need.

You will get the full hour for all that you might have to say when you come here. Kakasaheb will be here for some days yet, but may not be when you come.

Yours sincerely.

BAPU

SJT. J. C. KUMARAPPA
"MANORAMA"
PALLAMCOTTAH, (TINNEVELLY DIST.)

From the original: G.N. 10101

89. LETTER TO AMRITLAL V. THAKKAR

October 10, 1933

BHAI THAKKAR BAPA,

I also had a letter about Rohtak, and had read about the matter in the papers too. Lala Sham Lal, though he is in Lahore, has assured me that he will look into the matter on behalf of Rohtak, especially as he is minting money in Lahore.

We have no choice but to put up with Mr. Young's antics. After all, the axe can strike at the tree only if a wooden handle helps it.

You seem to have upset Mathuradas. I read a copy of his letter to you. I wonder what you could have written. Whatever that was, I know that Mathuradas is not at fault in the least. He is always very careful about things. But he easily gets angry. Nobody should get angry with old men like us who have grown up as slaves, even if they blurt out anything thoughtless. But can we expect young people to bear with old men? Please, therefore, apply some balm. I shall of course write to Mathuradas.[1] A copy of the letter[2] to Dr. Bidhan is enclosed. I have sent a copy of it to Devi Babu and also written to him in Hindi.

I enclose the letter received from Assam, and also a copy of my reply[3].

I see that I shall be confined here till November 7 at any rate. In a way I like that, because slowly I am disposing of the work which has accumulated and can give time to the visitors. Probably I shall also regain more strength during the time. Jamnalalji had unexpectedly to go to Bombay to help a friend, and so he might not have been able to send you a draft of the programme here.

He will return within four days. If you leave out the C.P.[4] and draw up another programme as I have suggested, you will be ready with it sooner. The entire C.P. must be covered at one time. Our party will include (1) you, (2) I, (3) Mirabehn, (4)

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Mathuradas Trikumji", p. 84.

[2] & [3] These are not available.

[4] Central Provinces

Chandrashankar, (5) Ramnarayan, (6) Nayar and anybody else whom you might bring with you.

Sastri wants to shift *Harijan* to Madras. His argument seems convincing. He is rusting in Poona. It is, therefore, likely to be shifted in about 15 days.

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 1126

90. LETTER TO CHIMANLAL PAREKH[1]

[Before *October 11, 1933*]

I am grieved to learn that you have not succeeded in bringing about conciliation. I am more grieved that the conciliation was obstructed by preliminary difficulties. I cannot decide, without hearing both the sides, what information could be asked and what information the mill-owners could not supply.

It is not necessary to refer such a question to arbitration. Mr. Gulzarilal Nanda, Secretary of the Labour Association, saw me and [I] told him that if I am asked to give my decision, I must have the arguments of both the sides before me. This can be done by written statements.

The Bombay Chronicle, 11-10-1933

91. LETTER TO PADMA

WARDHA,
October 11, 1933

CHI. PADMA,

I got your letter. I hope all of you are all right now. Give me a description of the accommodation. My weight has now gone up to 103 pounds. My diet includes milk, fruit and vegetables such as gourd, snakegourd, tomatoes, etc.

After a few days Anandi, Babu and Nirmala will leave for Ahmedabad. At present there are about 40 girls here. The girls under 12 willingly got their hair cut yesterday. I have been trying to persuade the rest.

[1] President, Ahmedabad Mill-owners' Association. He had informed Gandhiji about his resignation from the Conciliation Board.

You cannot be blamed for the doctor having given you an injection of brandy. You did not drink the thing for pleasure. Moreover, an injection of brandy is not as objectionable as a vaccine. I don't know any remedy for your complaint of the ear-drum. You should show it to a doctor, or a vaid who knows the remedy that can help you.

My tour will commence on November 8. Till then I shall remain here. I hope Sheela is enjoying her time.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 6145. Also C.W. 3500. Courtesy: Prabhudas Gandhi

92. *LETTER TO MATHURADAS TRIKUMJI*

October 11, 1933

And now regarding the Ashram. You are completely on the wrong track in this matter. To let the buildings and the land fall into ruins if the Government does not take possession of them would be vindictive and unnatural. If the Government had taken over the Ashram and then let it fall into ruin, we would have had nothing to say against it. But on what principle can we let the land be ruined if the Government does not take over? If we do that, why should we also not burn the movable property? According to the principle which you apply, those who burnt their crops acted wisely. I am convinced that by offering the Ashram land to the cause of Harijans, we shall have completely fulfilled the aim for which the Ashram existed. Its aim will have been fulfilled better in this manner than by its remaining in the possession of the Government. In handing over the Ashram to the Government, we secretly hoped that one day we would get back its possession. But by taking the step that we have taken, the inmates of the Ashram have given up their claim permanently and trusted their future wholly to God. From whatever point of view we look at the matter, we find that the course we have adopted is the only right one for satyagrahis. The desire to save property has been no motive at all in this transaction. It was only a question of what was right and consistent with ahimsa. The Government may let the whole country be ruined, but we should not if we can help. If this does not

satisfy you, you may ask me again. It shouldn't be difficult to satisfy your doubts in this matter.

[From Gujarati]

Bapuni Prasadi, p. 137

93. LETTER TO MATHURADAS TRIKUMJI

October 11, 1933

You seem to have forgotten one rule, namely, that one should never read what has been scored out by the writer of a letter. If one reads it by chance, one should not pay any attention to it. A person must be permitted to revise his ideas. It is lack of understanding to think ill of a person for even the most wicked thought, after he has corrected himself. If all of us revealed all our thoughts to one another, people wouldn't be happy even for a minute. I think you unnecessarily got angry.[1]

[From Gujarati]

Bapuni Prasadi, p. 138

94. LETTER TO H. K. HALES

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM, WARDHA,
October 12, 1933

DEAR FRIEND,

You will pardon me for being a little late in acknowledging your letter of 6th inst. The fact is that my capacity for dealing with the increasing correspondence is limited.

With reference to the suggestion made by you, evidently you do not recognize my limitations. In the first instance, I am not at all sure whether the Government would favour the idea of my visiting Midnapore and if it did, whether it would give me a free hand to work in the manner I might think best. Above all, you know the view that I have expressed.[2] Even a confirmed peace-maker like me can have no chance whatsoever if I have to address only one party of violence. I regard both the Government and the terrorists as representing violence; that of the

[1] *Vide* p. 81.

[2] *Vide* Vol. LV, "Statement to the Press", p. 399.

terrorists is unorganized, insane and wholly ineffective from my standpoint, and that of the Government is organized, deliberate and blasting though also wholly ineffective again from my standpoint. I should have short shrift from the terrorists if I could have no influence with the superior party of violence. Even so, do not for one moment believe that because I do not go to Midnapore I exert no influence over the terrorists. It may be a negative kind. I know what handicap I am working under. But I have boundless confidence in my creed of non-violence and in the end, not so distant as many people may imagine, non-violence will visibly succeed.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

H. K. HALES, ESQ., M.P.
53 GALSTAUN BLDGS
RUSSEL STREET, CALCUTTA

Gandhi-Nehru Papers, 1933. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

95. LETTER TO AMRITLAL V. THAKKAR

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM, WARDHA,
October 12, 1933

DEAR THAKKAR BAPA,

Herewith letters with copies of the correspondence with the authorities from Sahu and a copy of my reply to him. It might be as well for you to address a formal letter to the Collector or to the Home Member, Bihar and Orissa, just setting forth the difficulties unnecessarily created in the way of the prosecution of the movement.

I have your wire about N. Three days ago, just after the prayer meeting, she suddenly disappeared. Of late, her behaviour had been very strange. Her brain has, undoubtedly, softened. I have sent you a telegram in reply which, I hope, you have received. You need not waste any time over her and if she presses herself on your attention she may be reported to the police, though I hardly think that she will do that. Dr. Sharma has telegraphed me and I have advised him not to take any notice of her at all.

Yours sincerely,
BAPU

From a photostat: G.N. 1127

96. LETTER TO MAHENDRA V. DESAI

WARDHA,
October 12, 1933

CHI. MANU,

I got your letter written with red and green inks. The whiskers with which you have tried to beautify the letters don't look well. You can do that after you have learnt drawing. Just now it would be better to write legible, clean and simple letters.

Children should have plenty of things to write about.

My blessings to you all for the New Year[1]. May you live long, be great scholars and be very good men.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C.W. 3160. Courtesy: Valji G. Desai

97. LETTER TO JAISHREE RAIJI

October 12, 1933

DEAR SISTER,

You are not a good business woman. To expect me to commit myself to promise specific help is to expect to produce butter by churning sand. I don't have even a pie of my own. If, however, I know any specific need of yours which you cannot meet in any other way, and if by chance I come across a likely victim, I may beg some help from him. The fact is that at present my sole interest is in Harijan work.

MOHANDAS

[From Gujarati]
Bapujini Shital Chhayaman, p. 107

[1] *Kartak Sud* 1, New Year day, according to the Vikram Era, which fell on October 20, 1933

98. LETTER TO F. MARY BARR

October 13, 1933

CHI. MARY,

I am glad you have been free from fever. If it is not inconvenient, you should come at 4 p.m. and I will see you in your car—you won't come up.

Love.

BAPU

From a photostat: G.N. 6010. Also C.W. 3335. Courtesy: F. Mary Barr

99. NOTES

MANY THANKS

From friends all over India and from the West I have had many telegrams of the birthday greetings. I am deeply thankful to them for these. They will excuse me for my inability to send personal acknowledgements. I would have these friends to pray that God may make me worthy of their greetings. I know that the senders expect that I should be rendering some service to humanity. The wish is always present. God alone knows how far I succeed in the effort.

FORTHCOMING TOUR

If all goes well, my forthcoming tour for the Harijan cause should commence as from 8th November. I am said to be making substantial progress and Dr. Khare, who is just now in charge, is of opinion that I could safely commence the tour from the date mentioned. But this does not mean that I can cope with crowded programmes as I used to before. It is proposed to avoid travelling for two consecutive days, preferably Sundays and Mondays, in the week, to enable me to deal with *Harijan* editing and correspondence. As usual I shall make collections wherever I am taken. I should like to meet sanatanists at all places. I have no doubt that much opposition to the movement is due to misunderstanding. Naturally I must meet Harijans everywhere and there must be on the programme visits to Harijan quarters. Late hours should be avoided. Those places that feel tempted, in spite of the

handicaps suggested here, to send invitations should send them to Thakkar Bapa as early as possible, so as to avoid alterations in the programme and disappointment. All spectacular demonstrations, not required for the cause itself, should be avoided. Every pice should be economized. If addresses are to be presented at all, they should contain a brief description of the work done and statistics regarding Harijans, their occupations and economic condition, instead of a recital of my many excellences, which may be expected to take care of themselves, if there are any.

WILL OTHER UNIVERSITIES FOLLOW?

Sjt. N. K. Behere, a member of the Nagpur University and C. P. High School Board, writes to say that he moved a resolution that "students belonging to the Depressed Classes and the aboriginal tribes should not be charged examination fees", that he is glad to say that it was passed, with the addition of the clause—"up to the year 1940"—by the University and with a time-limit of five years by the High School Board, and that, therefore, no examination fees will be charged against these students from the Matriculation to the M.A. or LL.B. examinations for these periods, as far as the Central Provinces are concerned.

I congratulate the Nagpur University, the High School Board and the mover on the passing of the resolution. The addition of the time-limit does not detract anything from the resolution. It is a token of the optimism of the members of the respective bodies. They evidently think that in five to seven years the economic status of the classes exempted will have so improved that they will not need the exemption any longer. May that optimism be justified! Will the other Indian Universities and Boards copy the excellent example set by those of the Central Provinces?

Harijan, 14-10-1933

100. *SLAVERY* v. *UNTOUCHABILITY*

Deenabandhu Andrews writes:[1]

> A century ago a far more terrible form of 'man's inhumanity to man' than 'untouchability' was abolished in the West. Slavery made men and women into chattels, to be bought and sold and possessed by their owners. . . . Negroes from Africa were transported on ships like cattle and set to work in the sugar plantations just like beasts of

[1] Only excerpts are reproduced here.

burden. . . . The results of this slave traffic were to create a colour problem in America and elsewhere which has never yet been solved. . . .

It has been doubted whether any great moral reform has ever been carried through from purely humanitarian motives. The nearest to reach this standard was the abolition of slavery. . . . Great Britain paid £20,000,000 out of its own revenue in order to get rid of the evil. Therefore, it is not right to say that in politics philanthropy never gains its own victory. In the year 1833, philanthropy won.

What then will happen in 1933? . . . Surely if India could abolish altogether, within the present year, 'untouchability', . . . that would be the greatest philanthropic act of all.

Would that Deenabandhu's hope were fulfilled. Unless a miracle happens, the wholesale conversion of millions will not take place during the remaining months of this year and, maybe, for many more years to come.

But what is the meaning of the abolition of untouchability and what was the meaning of the abolition of slavery in 1833? The abolition of slavery was a legislative act. The slavery of the heart was not abolished then and even the lapse of a century has hardly abolished it altogether. This is written, not to belittle the great act of 1833, but to clear our minds and to understand the limitations of the effort of 1833.

Now, in the sense in which slavery was abolished in 1833, untouchability was abolished in 1932 at that representative meeting of Hindus assembled in Bombay in September 1932,[1] under the Chairmanship of Pandit Malaviyaji. It was no bogus affair. It was signalized by the immediate establishment of the All-India Anti-untouchability Board. There has been an incessant campaign against untouchability going on ever since, throughout the length and breadth of the land as the pages of *Harijan* can amply prove. One life is being definitely held as hostage for the due fulfilment of the solemn pledge of the Hindus.

Let no one underrate the effort of 1932 by saying that, whereas the abolition of 1833 was an act of a legislature, that of 1932 was an act of a voluntary association and, therefore, lacking sanction. In the nature of things the act of 1932 could not well be otherwise. Slavery was a matter of contract enforceable at law. Untouchability as a religious institution is, as Deenabandhu Andrews rightly says, "moral slavery". This could not be abolished by law. The only way in which it could be formally abolished

[1] *Vide* Vol. LI, p. 139.

was adopted in Bombay. Nor, as I have already shown, does the act lack sanction. The sanction, it is true, is moral. But moral sanctions are in the end far more potent than legal sanctions. Let the reader note that the Bills sought to be passed by the Central Legislature are not intended to be acts of abolition at all. One is meant to regulate temple-entry by Harijans and the other to withdraw legal recognition of untouchability. Neither affects the religious recognition and social practice. That is the function of the religious and social reformer. The Bills are very much needed to expedite reform; they cannot abolish untouchability. Untouchability is not a matter of contract. 'Untouchables' cannot be bought or sold.

Thus, I hope, it is clear that the abolition of untouchability analogous to that of slavery in 1833 definitely took place on 24th September 1932. Its anniversary was duly celebrated on the 24th day of last September. When the whole mass of Hindus will respond to the Resolution of Bombay will largely depend upon the earnestness of those who passed it and those who are now seeking to enforce it. But that is a process of which it will not be possible to say it took place on a particular day.

And I know that Deenabandhu is not looking forward to any such definite day when the mass manifestation will be a single act for mankind to see. What he wants, what I want and what every reformer is striving after is such a manifestation of the combined energy of Hindus as would show unmistakably to any passer-by that Hinduism has shed the distinction between high and low and that there is in it neither high caste nor low caste nor outcaste, whether by birth or in fact. A sinner is equal to the saint in the eye of God. Both will have equal justice, and both an equal opportunity either to go forward or to go backward. Both are His children, His creation. A saint who considers himself superior to a sinner forfeits his sainthood and becomes worse than the sinner who, unlike the proud saint, knows not what he is doing.

The mission of anti-untouchability organizations is perhaps the noblest of any that can be conceived. Let us, therefore, pray with Deenabandhu Andrews that they may be blessed with enough spiritual power to melt the age-long superstition that has corrupted Hindu society and that threatens to destroy Hinduism, if it does not react to the spirit of the times.

Harijan, 14-10-1933

101. WHAT ONE MAN CAN DO

A would-be Harijan Sevak writes to the following effect:[1]

I have little doubt that my correspondent missed a golden opportunity of serving both the poor sweeper and the 'orthodox' family. He should have gently remonstrated with the mother of the 'polluted' girl and he would have drawn her wrath towards himself, even if he had not shamed her into repentance. The sweeper would have felt the warmth of a friend in her need. The mother and the other relatives of the girl would at least have been set athinking. He would probably have been drawn into an argument. Perhaps the whole village might have interested itself in the matter and if he had risen to the occasion, he would have laid a solid foundation for substantial service in the future. Or he might have had a broken head. That, too, would have been a good passport for further service. It is clear to me that on such occasions, every lover of humanity should consider it his sacred duty to protect the helpless by tactful and gentle, yet courageous, intervention.

Now for the general question. Had we not lost self-confidence, the question, what an insignificant man can do, would never have arisen. No man is too insignificant for rendering personal service to those who may be in distress. The art does not need previous training. The ability to give effective help resides in every human being who has the will and the necessary courage. Thus my correspondent could certainly go to the Harijan quarters of his village and befriend them in a variety of ways. He could teach their children during his stay in the village. He need not fear the interruption due to his absence. For teaching does not mean only a knowledge of the three R's. It means many other things for Harijan humanity. Lessons in manners and sanitation are the indispensable preliminaries to the initiation into the three R's. The correspondent could take Harijan children for sightseeing, teach them innocent and even instructive games, could sweep and otherwise keep Harijan quarters clean, could find out cases of

[1] The letter is not reproduced here. It described how a Harijan woman, who had touched a caste-Hindu girl, was subjected to filthy abuse by caste Hindus. He also wanted to know how he could be useful in such a village where superstition reigned supreme and Harijans were treated like beasts.

illness among the Harijans and procure medical aid. He could take careful notes of their economic, social and other wants and transmit them to the Harijan Seva Sangh of his district or province, as the case might be, and thus become an effective link between the Harijans and the Seva Sangh. I have by no means exhausted the list of possibilities of individual effort. Mine is a mere illustrative list. A resourceful sevak can multiply the possibilities endlessly. "Where there's the will, there's the way."

Harijan, 14-10-1933

102. LETTER TO C. F. ANDREWS

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM, WARDHA,
October 14, 1933

MY DEAR CHARLIE,

I have your telegram to which I have sent you a reply as follows:

Your wire. Hope Gurudev will be soon restored. My love. Mohan.

Hales wrote to me suggesting that I should at once proceed to Midnapore and I understand that he has published the letter even without waiting for my reply. Here is a copy of my reply[1] to him for your information.

You know that I am taking all the rest that the doctors have advised and not moving out till the 7th of November. My weight has steadily gone forward and blood-pressure has steadily decreased.

I have told the C.U. Press[2] I have no objection to their publishing the passage on ahimsa.

Love.

MOHAN

Encl. 2

REV. C. F. ANDREWS
SANTINIKETAN
(BENGAL)

From a photostat: G.N. 3797

[1] *Vide* pp. 84-5.

[2] Presumably, Cambridge University Press

103. LETTER TO AMRITLAL V. THAKKAR

Saturday, October 14, 1933

BHAI THAKKAR BAPA,

You know the story of the person who intended to write ["went to] Ajmer" but wrote to the effect "died today".[1] And those who read his letter must have been as stupid as he was. If such a thing were suspected it would not have been sent away unrevised. I intended to write "Calcutta" and not "Delhi".[2] I don't even know that anything has been given to Delhi. N.'s story is a painful one. If the president suggests that the tour should commence on November 15 but I don't agree, should even that be a ground for complaint?

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 1128

104. MESSAGE ON DAYANANDA SEMI-CENTENARY[3]

October 14, 1933

Rishi Dayananda[4] was one of the greatest reformers in Hinduism. He stimulated Vedic studies, and fearlessly opposed untouchability among other evils.

The Hindu, 15-10-1933

[1] Writing *Ajmer gaya* (went to Ajmer), he happened to drop a diacritical mark making it read *aj mar gaya* (died today).

[2] *Vide* "A Note", p. 46.

[3] The message was sent to *Tej*, an Urdu daily published from Delhi.

[4] Dayananda Saraswati, founder of Arya Samaj

105. TALK WITH A KHADI WORKER[1]

[Before *October 15, 1933*]

We require machinery on a large scale for the industries running on steam power, etc. We do not have such machinery at present; we can get it from other countries only on the terms acceptable to them. We would also require experts to run such machines. We do not have enough of them either. At present, therefore, we shall have to import them from outside. Nor do we have the capital required to meet the needs of a population of 30 crores. Hence, even if it is possible to be self-sufficient through industries run on steam power, etc., it would take a long time. Moreover, if this source of tremendous energy is employed on a large scale in the country, it would lead to a great increase in the present unemployment. It is said that in America every man gets the work of 36 slaves with the help of gigantic machines. This means that with the help of these machines each person does the work of 36 persons. If we estimate that the population of India will be 37 crores when it reaches such a stage, it would mean that 36 crores of them would remain unemployed. In other words, to enable one crore of people in this country to be as rich as Americans, 36 crores would have to commit suicide, or else a Chenghiz Khan or a Ravana should wipe out 36 crores and distribute the country among the remaining one crore. The per capita distribution of land in this country is two or three *bighas* only. This much land is certainly not enough for one's maintenance. Everyone, therefore, must have some other occupation at home. This is naturally the spinning-wheel. We require very little capital to make it universal. Other requirements would be available in every village. All that is necessary is a change of attitude among the people. They must shake off their lethargy. The solution of the economic problem of Harijans also lies in this. If the machine age comes into vogue, all the Harijans would be included among those 36 crores.

[From Gujarati]

Harijanbandhu, 15-10-1933

[1] This appeared in Chandrashankar Shukla's weekly letter under the title "Why the Spinning-wheel Only?".

106. REPERCUSSIONS OF UNTOUCHABILITY

Some idea of the wide repercussions of untouchability can be had from the following letter[1] of Sjt. Mulchand Parekh.

Is it any wonder if the cup of sorrow overflows when to such ignorance and resultant superstitions is added the dross of untouchability? There is only one remedy for it and that is that a Harijan worker should tolerantly look upon all these insults as symptoms of the same disease and proceed to find a solution for it. He should gain access to the shepherd's family, explain things to them with patience and remove their ignorance. If any jealous person has taken advantage of their superstitious nature, he should make a peaceful endeavour to persuade him. These experiences suggest that the workers ought to go to the villages and share the people's lives. Moreover, the frightened shepherd needs to be reassured. He should be convinced about the futility of a boycott and he should be made to feel secure with our readiness to protect him in every way.

[From Gujarati]

Harijanbandhu, 15-10-1933

107. LETTER TO MADAN MOHAN MALAVIYA

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM, WARDHA,
October 15, 1933

As all the energy that I have been able to regain has been given to the immediate work in hand, I have not been able to write to you. There was nothing new I had to say and I knew that you would not misunderstand any action that I took. I, therefore, did not send my explanation believing that, if anything I did required explanation, you would not hesitate to demand it of me.

I have kept myself informed of your health, or rather want of it, and I realized long ago that it was vain to plead with you

[1] Not translated here. The correspondent had described an incident in which a shepherd was considered responsible for bringing about disease and death to cattle because of his association with Harijans and was threatened with ostracism or worse.

that you should take this change or that. In this as in other matters you are a law unto yourself. I do, therefore, satisfy myself with praying that God, who has taken care of you all these long years and who has blessed you with energy of which the youth of India may well be jealous, will continue to take care of you, so long as He needs your services.

I write this letter with reference to your latest statement. My own impression is that the All-India Congress Committee, if it meets, will by an overwhelming majority pass a resolution endorsing continuance of the civil resistance movement. That being my conviction, I see no reason for convening a meeting for such a confirmation, because the confirmation will not accelerate the pace of civil resistance. It has to take its own natural course. But, if you believe that the All-India Congress Committee will adopt a new programme and give up civil resistance, there is absolutely no reason whatsoever why you should not actively canvass for a requisition, on receipt of which Jawaharlal is bound to convene a meeting. And I would venture to submit that if you would promote a requisition you should also in consultation with the requisitionists chalk out a definite policy and programme which you will prosecute unflinchingly. If this is not done and a mere requisition is sent the meeting will simply end in a desultory discussion and ill-thought-out resolutions. Whilst I would gladly attend any such meeting and say my say, I am not keen on attending such a meeting and I would gladly refrain from attending it, if my absence was, from the highest motives, desired by you or any body of responsible members.

PANDIT MADAN MOHAN MALAVIYA
MUSSOORIE

Gandhi-Nehru Papers, 1933. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

108. LETTER TO JAWAHARLAL NEHRU

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM, WARDHA,
October 15, 1933

MY DEAR JAWAHARLAL,

I had your letter enclosing a copy of your letter to Krishnamurti of Madura.

Here is a copy of my letter[1] to Hales, in reply to his letter which you must have seen in the Press. And here is also a copy of my letter to Malaviyaji.[2] It speaks for itself.

All my good wishes for the wedding. I shall be with you in spirit on that day.

Love.

BAPU

Encl. 2

Gandhi-Nehru Papers, 1933. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

109. LETTER TO SARUPRANI NEHRU

October 15, 1933

DEAR SISTER,

You are always in our thoughts though I may not write to you. We receive news of you from Jawaharlal. I hope you will be well enough on the 20th. I regret my inability to be there on that day but my heart will certainly be there. May God grant you quick recovery.

Yours,
MOHANDAS

[From Hindi]

Gandhi-Indira Gandhi Papers. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Also G.N. 11406

[1] *Vide* pp. 84-5.
[2] *Vide* the preceding item.

110. LETTER TO JAWAHARLAL NEHRU

October 15, 1933

MY DEAR JAWAHARLAL,

Here is a letter for Mother.[1] Let us all hope that she will be well enough to take part in the ceremony.

Have you introduced the Roman character for writing Hindi?

A typed letter[2] is going to you [today][3] with a copy of my letter to Malaviyaji.

Love.

BAPU

From a facsimile: C.W. 10108

111. LETTER TO JANAKDHARI PRASAD

October 15, 1933

DEAR JANAKDHARI BABU,

On going through the arrears of my correspondence, I came upon your letter of 28th August last. But, before I came upon your letter I was often thinking of you, and only the other day I discussed about you with Jamnalalji.

Your children are so young that it is very difficult for any institution to take them without you and your wife. That means you must find something there. The first thing is that you must humble yourself and put yourself on a level with the common labourer and bring up your children to become labourers. But even labourers should have education. That education should be given by you. Your wife should also labour. If you will accommodate yourself to this life, a great load will be off your mind, which itself would soothe your nerves and much of the dyspepsia would also go under the stimulating effect of the new life, that is, if you take it joyously. Unless we who have received a fairly liberal education effect a revolution in our life, we would simply remain parasites that we are—living on the sweat

[1] *Vide* the preceding item.

[2] *Vide* p. 97.

[3] Illegible in the source

of the famishing peasant. You should discuss this matter with Brijkishore Babu and others.

I would like you to be the pioneer of the new thought and the new movement, and yet it is really not new, for, I gave it currency when I returned to India in 1915, and have been trying to live in accordance with it, however imperfectly I might have done it. You have, therefore, to perfect it.

Yours sincerely,
BAPU

From a photostat: G.N. 54

112. LETTER TO AGATHA HARRISON

October 15, 1933

MY DEAR AGATHA,

It was stupid of me not to acknowledge your letter about Vithalbhai Patel by the ocean mail.[1] I am therefore punishing myself by sending this by air mail. I must say I have not taken kindly to it as yet. It is the luxury of the rich and the necessity created by those who would rule the earth, water and air and their inhabitants. You can't understand how deeply I appreciate letters such as you wrote about V. J. Patel. I had cabled to Bose as soon as I got your timely cable and Bose promptly replied.

I am glad you were in Geneva for that meeting. You will not hesitate to ask for any information or explanation you may need. We here may not always anticipate your requirements.

Here is a copy of my letter[2] to Hales, M.P., about Midnapore. You are likely to have a mutilated version by Reuter. The copy is therefore for your information and use if need be. Hales's letter was handed to the Press without his waiting for my reply. You might have seen it.

Mahadev is in Belgaum all alone save a cart-load of books.[3] Devdas in Multan and Pyarelal in Nasik.

[1] The addressee had noted down on this letter: "When I was in Geneva in October 1933, I went to see Vithalbhai Patel who was dying in a sanatorium in Gland. Subhas Bose was looking after him, and I wrote an account of this visit to Gandhiji."

[2] *Vide* pp. 84-5.

[3] He was preparing to translate *Anasaktiyoga* into English which was later published under the title *The Gita According to Gandhi; vide* Vol. XLI.

I wonder if you are getting any daily or weekly newspapers from here. If you or anyone has time to read them I could easily send a selection, unless you will make it yourself.

Love.

BAPU

From a photostat: G.N. 1471

113. LETTER TO ABBAS TYABJI

October 15, 1933

MY DEAR BHRRR[1],

You must give me your reasons for disliking and distrusting Kamaladevi. I have to advise and I cannot without your assistance.

Rehana[2] has been quite silent of late.

How is Hamida[3] doing?

Love to you all from,

BHRRR

From a photostat: S.N. 9587

114. LETTER TO PRABHAVATI

WARDHA,
October 15, 1933

CHI. PRABHAVATI,

I got your letter today. I was getting a little worried. You should certainly stay there as long as you find it necessary. On my part, I have given you complete freedom to come away here whenever you wish. But you should stay where your duty requires you to stay. Do call on Mother. Take care of your health. Write to me from time to time. My weight is 103 pounds at present, and the blood-pressure is 160-100. This should be considered very good. I am continuing the same diet. There has been no change. Anandi and Om[4] help Ba. Anandi, Bachu and Babu will leave after the 20th. Gopi certainly misses you. And as long as you were here I also did not worry about her. She will go to Bombay for Diwali. She will start from here on Tuesday[5]. N. has left without telling anybody. When

[1] This was how Gandhiji and the addressee greeted each other.

[2] Addressee's daughter

[3] Addressee's grand-daughter

[4] Uma, younger daughter of Jamnalal Bajaj

[5] October 17

last we heard from her she was in Delhi. Amalabehn is here. Just now at least she is doing good work.

Krishna's marriage will take place in Allahabad on the 20th. Prabhudas's marriage will take place here on the 17th. The bride[1] is a fine girl. She is his own choice. I believe that they will be happy. I had a letter from Lakshmi. Write to Gopi from time to time. Write to Prabhudas also. I know that you need no advice in this matter. Make it a rule to read something daily. Read a little English and a little from the *Ramayana*, and study arithmetic a little. And, above everything else, there is the *Gita*. Surendra has been released. He will come here in a few days.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 3434

115. LETTER TO JAWAHARLAL NEHRU

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM, WARDHA,
October 16, 1933

MY DEAR JAWAHARLAL,

Herewith the resignation[2] of Jamnalalji. If you think that it must not be sent in and is likely to cause embarrassment, you need not take any action upon it. You may then return it with your reasons after you are free from the wedding arrangements. If, however, you think that the resignation may be accepted, you may publish it forthwith. I know that the Treasurer can only be appointed by the All-India Congress Committee. Therefore, the treasurership may remain in Jamnalalji's hands, for the time being. The chief thing is that he ceases to be a member of the Working Committee. I think that the step is a wise and necessary one. Constituted as he is, it is risky for him to seek imprisonment just now, that is, without taking the rest that the specialist considers necessary. But, ordinarily, fighters can't consult their health to the extent that Jamnalalji's temperament demands and as he shares the same view of a civil resister's duty that I have, he is ill at ease, so long as he holds a responsible office in the Congress organization.

[1] Amba Devi, daughter of Lala Lalchand of Bijnor

[2] From the Congress Working Committee

I have given you my reasoning which decided my acceptance of Jamnalalji's proposal to resign.

Yours,
BAPU

Encl. 1

Gandhi-Nehru Papers, 1933. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

116. STATEMENT TO PRESS

WARDHAGANJ,
October 17, 1933

I regret to have to inform the public that Shrimati N. disappeared suddenly from the Wardha Ashram about ten days ago. She had of late become more than usually unbalanced. All the affection that parents, brothers or sisters could show was shown to her, but evidently her fearful past proved too strong for her. It is likely that now she is again leading the old thoughtless, untruthful and unclean life.

I give this information to warn young men against tempting her, or being tempted by her. I would like those who may come in contact with her not to give any financial aid. She is hardly responsible for her actions, and it would be a deliverance for her, if some philanthropic institution would take charge of her. If she sees this notice, I would have her to recall all the promises she made to herself and to me, and in humility to ask God to exorcise the devil that has possessed her. She knows that if she asks truly, her prayer will not go in vain. She had such experiences in her sane moments.

She was last heard of in Delhi.

Amrita Bazar Patrika, 18-10-1933

117. LETTER TO C. F. ANDREWS

October 17, 1933

MY DEAR CHARLIE,

I think you told me that you visited the Booker Washington Institution at Tuskegee. For the sake of Harijans I have been reading literature about that wonderful institute. Does your personal inspection confirm what appears in the books about it? Will you write a brief account under the title 'What I saw in Tuskegee'? Did you meet any of the Red Indians? Can you give me your impression of them? The United States Government seem to be spending large sums on their education and general improvement.

Love.

MOHAN

REV. C. F. ANDREWS
ANAND BHAWAN
ALLAHABAD

From a photostat: G.N. 3798

118. LETTER TO G. D. BIRLA

[*October 18, 1933*][1]

BHAI GHANSHYAMDAS,

Despite all intentions of writing to you I have been unable to do so till today. Jamnalal shields me well from the visitors but who can protect me from letters? Never am I able to clear my desk. Because the order of going to bed early has also to be observed I am writing this having got up at 3 a.m. The implication is not that this letter is the sole cause for rising early. Even during the time allowed in the evening I am prevented from doing anything substantial by the pestering insects.

I have read your article about Jawaharlal. It is good and you have done no harm by writing it. There could be no need

[1] The date is inferred from the reference to Gopi's departure; *vide* "Letter to Prabhavati", pp. 100-1.

to suppress our opinions about one another. When Truth alone is to be sought, suppression of one's opinion becomes a fault. You must have sent the article to Jawaharlal, if not, do so. He is a very straightforward man and corrects his error. I am confident ultimately he is bound to follow the path of Truth. And if his line of thinking proves to be correct, comments would be superfluous. Equality can never mean uniformity. Equality only means uniformity in justice. There is no distinction between an atom and the Himalayas in the eyes of God. He is the same to the atom as to the Himalayas.

Gopi left yesterday. I could not have a long talk with her but she used to come and sit with me every day. She is an extremely simple girl and was very happy here; she mixed with everybody. She went to Bombay on account of Diwali. She was also keen to see the illuminations there. It will be good if she returns after Diwali. I have no doubt that she will be ready. Gajanan has replied to the letter I wrote to him. Gopi too was asked to write a letter. Write to me about your health.

Blessings from
BAPU

[PS.]

I shall get someone to write in English about *Harijan*. It was very good that . . .[1] ultimately did stay . . . .[2]

From Hindi: C.W. 7940. Courtesy: G. D. Birla

119. LETTER TO JAWAHARLAL NEHRU

October 18, 1933

MY DEAR JAWAHARLAL,

Herewith two garlands made out of yarn specially spun by me today for the bride and the bridegroom charged with my blessings. Will you please put them round their necks on my behalf! I hope they will reach you in time.

I cannot help being sorry that the ceremony has been vetoed by Mrs. Hutheesing. But I suppose in these matters I am a back number.

I understand what you say about Dipak. I would write to Sarala Devi in as gentle a manner as I can.

[1] & [2] The source is illegible here.

Love to you all.

BAPU

[PS.]

I would like you to wire to me when all is over that Mother was able to stand the strain.

A Bunch of Old Letters, p. 112

120. SPEECH AT WEDDING OF PRABHUDAS GANDHI

WARDHAGANJ,
October 18, 1933

At the conclusion of the ceremony addressing the couple Gandhiji said that this was an inter-provincial marriage and not an inter-caste one. He had no hesitation in advocating inter-caste marriages under well-defined limitations, for he believed that there was no varna or division in the original sense of the term and that limiting marriage to the same division or varna was never its distinguishing feature.

He drew the attention of the couple to the fact that marriage was not intended to indulge in one's passions but to impose a restraint upon them. He hoped that both of them would make service of the country their mission in life and then they would find that their joint life would be one of happiness, contentment and increasing self-restraint.

It gave him much pleasure to find that the bride came from an Arya Samajist family. His relations with the Arya Samajists, he continued, had always been intimate, although they knew that there were honest differences between them. This marriage had brought them nearer.

The Bombay Chronicle, 19-10-1933

121. LETTER TO RAMABEHN JOSHI

WARDHA,
October 18, 1933

CHI. RAMA,

If the doctor says that it is not necessary now for you to stay in the hospital, I would advise you to come here. The weather here is very good indeed. There is quite a large number of girls. You will be able to help Lakshmibehn a little, and can also have your arm massaged. I shall not be happy if you stay anywhere else, and shall also keep on worrying about the condition of your arm. You should still not use it very freely. You will also get a doctor's services here. If you decide to come

here, the earlier you come the better, so that we can be together for some days. The kitchen here runs for about 60 persons, more than 40 of whom are girls. Anandi, Bachu and Babu will start from here today. Tarabehn is expected any day now.

Prabhudas was married today to a girl from North India. She is 24 years of age, and her name is Amba.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 5357

122. LETTER TO AMRITLAL V. THAKKAR

October 19/20, 1933[1]

CHI. THAKKAR BAPA,

Every day I think of writing you a long letter and it is postponed every day. Jamnalal can help avoid interviews, but who can stem the increasing flow of correspondence? I have got to go to bed early and so some letters do remain unattended piling the heap of papers up. I carry on in this pitiful state.

What should I write about N.? I have done my best for her. I think she did try honestly to restrain her passions. But she slipped during her attempts and ultimately ran away. If she drowns herself, I would neither be surprised nor sorry. If she is alive, I would not give up hopes for her improvement. I do not at all repent having readmitted her. It was my duty to do so. She was basking in affection not only here but at Sabarmati also. She used to write to me that she never experienced such affection even from her parents. All were content with whatever little restraint she voluntarily accepted. How can one be changed so suddenly, who remained unbridled for several years? I have not yet judged . . ..[2] I have never noticed any fault on his part in connection with N.

The Agra affair is very sad. We reap what we sow. Let Hinduism perish if the so-called sanatanists fail to wake up and, in their vanity resort to goondaism with the help of the masses. It is enough if we continue doing our duty. God's will prevails ulti-

[1] The letter bears the date October 19, 1933, at the end of paragraph 2, but was signed "Wardha, 20-11-1933", which appears to be a slip for "20-10-1933". The letter was evidently written before Gandhiji's tour of the Central Provinces on November 8, 1933.

[2] The name has been omitted.

mately. The affairs at Samartha and Dholka are not only sad but shameful for us also. Similar petty cases take place here too. I intend to write something in *Harijan* about this matter.[1]

I think it is good that *Harijan* is shifted to Madras. It was the only way to utilize Sastri fully. Kodand Rao had arranged a small function in honour of Sastri. Deodhar spoke there. He hinted at the same thing. He said Sastri was withering in Poona and will blossom in Madras. Sastri has gained confidence to run *Harijan*. He will get help from some others. It will be away from Delhi; but that is no inconvenience. The Hindi edition is already based in Delhi. If Sastri could not settle in Poona to devote himself fully to *Harijan* he could do so much less in Delhi. His suffering was mental and genuine. Since we were to bring out *Harijan* with the help of Sastri, it was our duty to look to his convenience. I shall send you Sastri's letter, if I have not destroyed it, which will give you an idea of his mental distress. It has always been my opinion that the English edition can be produced best and cheapest from Madras. However, you may write to and arrange with Sastri directly in case you and Ghanshyamdas are not fully satisfied with my letter.

My mention of rest on Sunday and Monday may be considered an oversight. You are welcome to include Monday and Tuesday in the programme that you may chalk out.

Tour programme for C.P. will be completed within the time prescribed by you. Dr. Khare has already issued the tour programme for C.P. (Marathi). You may have seen it. He wished to write to you also. Satisbabu has written from Bengal. He has also written to you.

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 1133. Also C.W. 10489. Courtesy: Harijan Sevak Sangh

123. LETTER TO H. K. HALES[2]

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM, WARDHA,
October 20, 1933

DEAR FRIEND,

I am able this time to send you by return [of post] my reply to your letter of 18th inst.

[1] *Vide* "Two Cruel Cases", pp. 117-8.

[2] The letter was published in *The Hindu*, 29-10-1933, with slight verbal variations.

I have no such modesty as you attribute to me. I meant literally what I said about my limitations. They are obvious. I am dying to co-operate with anybody and everybody and certainly with the Government in restoring peace that is living and real, not the peace of the grave. A living peace cannot be and will never be brought about at the point of the bayonet. The plan of the Government is, at any rate seems to me to be, after that of a physician who seeks to remove a deadly disease without probing and dealing with the causes. I can be no party to any such plan. And I should despair of proving my sincerity about non-violence, if it requires further proof after my having lived a life of non-violence in the face of circumstances often most provoking, for an unbroken period of 40 years and more.

As to your suggestion about an All-Parties meeting, judged by the accepted standard I have proved a hopeless failure, as witness[1] my last performance at such a meeting[2] convened for the purpose of achieving a communal settlement. I was no less a failure at the[3] various meetings that we held in India for similar purposes.

Your sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat: G.N. 1472 a

124. *LETTER TO AGATHA HARRISON*

Unrevised *October 20, 1933*

MY DEAR AGATHA,

I had your long letter. I do not know whether you had sent copies to my two partners. Anyway I have posted it on to Andrews. You thought that we were all at the same place. But just at present we are not.

Your work in Geneva was great. And I know wherever you are you can give a good account of yourself. But I retain the same opinion that I gave you some time ago that if you came as a delegate your expenses should be found by your constituency. But if you come for the purpose of seeing things first hand, your expenses can be found from here. Whether it is worth while your

[1] The source has "witnessed".

[2] The reference presumably is to one of the informal meetings held in London; *vide* Vol. XLVIII, pp. 115 and 150.

[3] The source has "two".

coming for that special purpose is solely for you to decide. If you feel the need you should come. If you are a good sailor you can certainly come in the 3rd class without the slightest difficulty and see more of life, because you see more of common humanity as a 3rd class passenger than as a saloon passenger. That is my own experience and that of others who have travelled in all classes.

About the ban on Bose's passport, I am quite sure that they would not remove it at present except under humiliating conditions. I entirely agree with you that what he does not know of Bengal is not worth knowing and I know also that he can render the greatest help in the restoration of peace, but his difficulty would be the same as mine.

I send you a copy of another letter[1] which I am obliged to write to Mr. Hales. The fact is that the Government demand co-operation on their own terms, which nobody freely gives and which no self-respecting man can ever give.

I think that this covers all the important points you have raised in your letter.

Yours sincerely,
BAPU

From a photostat: G.N. 1472

125. LETTER TO RUKMINIDEVI BAZAJ

October 20, 1933

CHI. RUKMINI,

I heard from you after many days. Today is the first day of the new year. I again advise you to remember that life is well governed by observing rules. It is desirable that you should make a rule to write to me, if not once a week, once a fortnight or at least once a month. Personally, I believe that the ideal thing is to do everything according to a rule. Prabhudas was married the day before yesterday. The bride seems a good girl.

Blessings to you both from
BAPU

From Gujarati: C.W. 9701. Courtesy: Benarsilal Bazaj

[1] *Vide* the preceding item.

126. AN M.A. IN A HURRY

An M.A. of Kerala writes a long letter from which I take the following paragraphs[1] of public importance:

I can heartily endorse my correspondent's statement that 'there can be no peace for me or him and his friends, if untouchability continues in our country'. My word also stands. But untouchability will not be removed by force or, which is perhaps the same thing, by law, nor will temples be opened by such means. Legislation is badly required to remove legal obstruction which has been created by certain judicial decisions. But if and when the two Bills are passed, untouchability lurking in the Hindu heart will not necessarily be removed nor will public temples be automatically opened. Untouchability will go when the Hindu heart has melted, and the public temples will be opened when the worshippers have discovered that God is no respector of persons and that He does not reside in temples which man's insolence or ignorance has closed against any body of persons who are desirous of offering worship on the same terms as they.

The correspondent would throw the sole responsibility for opening the Guruvayur temple on me. He should know that it is no one man's work. It will be done in God's good time. Workers can but work to the best of their ability. Let him also know that Kelappan's pledge[2] is not exhausted. His visit to Colombo is temporary. Rajagopalachari works by prayer even though he is in prison. Madhavan Nair, that great and true Kerala servant, is no more. But I have no doubt that his spirit watches over our conduct and misconduct. It will not rest till Hinduism is purified of the evil of untouchability. And the correspondent may rest assured that, when the proper time comes and if God wills it, both Kelappan and I would again stake our lives for the opening, not only of the Guruvayur temple, but many others.

As to the khadi service, the correspondent's complaint is wholly unjustified. Those who are engaged in khadi service may

[1] Not reproduced here. The correspondent had written about the continuing evil of untouchability, indifference of khadi workers towards Harijan work and villagers' attitude towards Harijans, and suggested steps to instil courage, self-confidence, etc., into Harijans.

[2] *Vide* Vol. LII.

not very well be expected to give their time to Harijan service. But I know that the vast majority of them have no untouchability in their breasts and that they never miss an opportunity of rendering whatever personal service they can to Harijans. There is no bar to taking Harijans in khadi service. Lastly I may state that several thousand Harijan families are being supported through the khadi organizations dotted over the whole country.

The correspondent is on surer ground in his complaints about villagers' attitude in many parts of India. The ignorance of the villagers is colossal. They are wedded to the idea of high and low. Village workers are far too few for the numerous villages. But there is no cause whatever for despair. Villagers are waking up. They have begun to realize that to deny to fellow beings the same status that they have for themselves is to deny God's equal justice. The correspondent has no notion of the silent but solid work that many workers are doing in and around villages. This Harijan work being purely religious does not lend itself much to the spectacular. It will prosper in exact proportion to the purity and penance of the workers. It will be surely retarded by the impurity, selfishness or mixed motives of workers.

As to putting life into Harijans, it will be there immediately the crushing dead weight of untouchability is lifted from off the heads of Harijans. They should, of course, have, as they are having, religious and other instruction in the many schools that have been and are being opened. Time is on our side and so is the time spirit. No religion can possibly stand the blazing light of the world's opinion that is being directed towards all religions, and still retain in it proved evils and superstitions.

Harijan, 21-10-1933

127. WHAT OF SWEEPERS IF . . . ?

An English friend referring to two ladies who are coming to India writes:[1]

> They . . . want to do their own "sweeper" work, even though it may get them into trouble with some of the local caste Hindus . . . it may get them into difficulties with the local sweepers, who will complain . . . that they are losing good work, and goad wages. Now, what is the right reply to that? Supposing that thousand of

[1] Only excerpts are reproduced here.

> millions of caste Hindus and others, up and down India, resolved to do their own "sweeping", as an act of penance and visible proof that they felt themselves no better than sweepers, many sweepers would lose their livelihood. . . . It is to some extent the old story (in a different form) of the displacement of labour as a result of social development. I don't remember seeing any comment of yours or anyone's on this point in *Harijan*. . . .

It is quite true that I have not discussed this question in these pages as a difficulty, as it has never arisen that way as yet. In several places, including the late Ashram at Sabarmati and its branch at Wardha, the inmates have been doing their own sweeper work without the local sweepers being ruffled. At Sabarmati, in the beginning stages, we had sweepers, who were paid a paltry sum. It was not possible to pay them more for about two hours' work which at best was never satisfactorily done. They did not know the hygienic method. They would not easily take to it.

Sanitary service is by no means a hereditary occupation of long standing. All the evidence hitherto collected by me goes to show that before the Mohammedan conquest there were no professional sweepers; the Hindu social system, being based on rural conditions, did not necessitate such sanitary service as is indispensable in these days of rapid urban growth. I do not, however, wish to convey the meaning that rural sanitation during the purely Hindu period was by any means perfect or even fairly satisfactory. On the contrary, it seems to have been very crude. The highly scientific methods evolved and still being developed in the West are undoubtedly a recent and very beneficial growth.

Holding these views, I can only welcome the determination of the two English sisters to do their own sweeper work. If I were in their place, I should invite the sweepers in the neighbourhood to give other service, if they were in want of employment, or to learn the hygienic and clean method of doing sanitary work if they were minded so to do. Whether they took up some other work or no, whether they volunteered to learn better methods of sanitation or no, they could not harbour any feeling of being wronged for not being asked to do sanitary service for the sisters, for I would expect them to work for the betterment of Harijans in a hundred ways. The difficulty can only, and must always, arise when things are done in a patronizing or selfish manner. I would, for instance, be patronizing, if I offered now and then to work a little in a touch-me-not fashion, side by side with my sweeper,

just in order to be able to declare at public meetings that even I did sweeping alongside my sweeper. I would be acting selfishly if I did my own sweeping for the sake of keeping my closets cleaner than they would otherwise be and did not want to waste my time in teaching my sweeper the modern method or did not want to pay more for more efficient and more intelligent service. But there never can be any offence taken when I serve my sweeper neighbours in a variety of ways and, by doing my own sweeping, teach them by example that sanitary service is not only not a mean occupation, but a perfectly honourable and most useful occupation which everyone should learn and many may follow with great benefit to society, if it is taken up in a humanitarian spirit.

Harijan, 21-10-1933

128. LETTER TO PREMABEHN KANTAK

WARDHA,
October 21, 1933

CHI. PREMA,

I think I told you in one of my letters that I intentionally did not write to you, so that you might receive all the letters of Dhurandhar[1]. But I gather from Amtul's letter that you expect me to write and that you can get my letters. I was thinking of writing, when I got Sushila's[2] postcard yesterday. I am, therefore, writing this letter before the morning prayer.

I see that you are all right there. If you are permitted to write, give me your daily time-table and any other details about food, etc., which you can.

I have just now Ba, Mira, Chandrashankar and Nayar with me. Kaka is here at present, Kishorelal and Gomati[3] left the day before yesterday. Swami[4] will arrive shortly, and so also will Tarabehn. Pannalal[5], Nanibehn[6] and Gangabehn[7] are in Ahmedabad. The Ashram will be permanently converted into a hostel for Harijans. The office, etc., will be handed over for that purpose. You must have read all this in papers. I hope you and all the other women liked this idea.

[1] Addressee's former teacher
[2] Addressee's friend Sushila Pai
[3] Kishorelal Mashruwala's wife
[4] Swami Anandananda
[5], [6]& [7] The Jhaveris

I get long letters from Mahadev. He has collected a library in Belgaum. I hope Durga[1] hears from him. Devdas is happy in Multan, and Pyarelal in Nasik. Ba is getting ready [to go to jail].

There are more than 40 girls now under Lakshmibehn's[2] charge. She is being helped by Dwarkanath[3]. Narmada is with Vinoba in Nalwadi.

Prabhudas's marriage was celebrated on Wednesday. He has got a partner of his choice. She is 24 years old. She has been educated at the Gurukul and seems intelligent.

My tour begins on the 8th. I hope all the women are well and make good use of every moment of their time. More after I hear from you.

Blessings to you all from
BAPU

[PS.]

I have not revised the letter.

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 10351. Also C.W. 6790. Courtesy: Premabehn Kantak

129. *LETTER TO VALLABHBHAI PATEL*

October 21, 1933

BHAI VALLABHBHAI,

I got your letter. I am doing what you wish. There will be no moral difficulty. I should like you to stop worrying.[4] You must have a telescope more powerful than even Premlilabehn's. Through hers a mustard seed will appear as big as a mountain. I hope you remember the planet Uno[5].

Prabhudas's marriage took place on Wednesday. He got a girl exactly of the type that he wanted, and through his own efforts. She is 24 and is thoroughly simple in habits. Since she is from North India, she cares neither for the vermilion mark nor for bangles. She wasn't wearing bangles even during the marriage ceremony. Janakibehn has forced bangles on her wrists now. She is fairly well educated. She is an Arya Samajist.

[1] Mahadev Desai's wife
[2] Lakshmibehn Khare
[3] Dwarkanath Harkare
[4] The addressee had requested Gandhiji to take rest.
[5] This seems to be an error for Pluto, which was discovered in 1930.

I had a long letter from Mahadev (written from Belgaum Jail). It is like a long poem. I send with this a few extracts from it.

Brijkishan[1] got ill after going to Delhi. Ba is getting ready [for courting imprisonment]. Kishorelal and Gomati left the day before yesterday. Anandi, Bachu and Babu also left. Kishorelal went to Akola. Anandi intended to get down on the way to see Lakshmidas. There has been no letter from Lakshmidas yet. Even if she marries, she will continue to enjoy complete freedom in the Ashram.

What is your weight? What is your food? How much milk and curds do you take? May I send anything for you? Remember that even a mother doesn't serve an item during a meal unasked. And in this case the mother is a person like me. What can you expect then? It is now time to attend the morning prayer. So I stop here.

Blessings from
BAPU

[From Gujarati]
Bapuna Patro–2: Sardar Vallabhbhaine, pp. 34-5

130. LETTER TO F. MARY BARR

October 21, 1933

CHI. MARY,

You may take barley not because you have some with you but because you need it. But if you are constipated, it is not barley you need but some green, such as gourd[2] or the like.

Love.

BAPU

From a photostat: G.N. 6011. Also C.W. 3337. Courtesy: F. Mary Barr

[1] Brijkrishna Chandiwala
[2] The source has *dudhi* in Devanagari script.

131. LETTER TO KOTWAL

October 21, 1933

BHAI KOTWAL,

As a general rule it can be stated that a person who has faith in civil disobedience and has joined it cannot take up any other work. But, on the other hand, a person who has faith in it but has already taken up some responsibility should not join it at the risk of failing in that responsibility. "Better one's duty, bereft of merit. . . "[1]

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 3605

132. LETTER TO VANAMALA N. PARIKH

October 21, 1933

CHI. VANAMALA,

I hope you have now completely got over your illness. Now go and join Anandi, Bachu and Babu as soon as possible. If you had been well and had come here, both you and I would have been happy.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 5782. Also C.W. 3005. Courtesy: Vanamalabehn M. Desai

[1] *Bhagavad Gita*, III. 35

133. LETTER TO MOHAN N. PARIKH

October 21, 1933

CHI. MOHAN,

I got your letter. You must have completely recovered now. I will be glad, therefore, if you join Anandi.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 9186

134. LETTER TO JAISUKHLAL GANDHI

October 21, 1933

CHI. JAISUKHLAL[1],

I got your letter.

I had heard about Umiya's[2] illness. I had talked about her with Jamnalalji. You should solve the problem about the charkhas there. One of you should try to gin with the help of one of your charkhas and make the necessary changes in it. Keshu's letter is enclosed.

Vinod and Kusum wrote to me also. I hope you keep good health.

Blessings from
BAPU

[PS.]

You must have read everything about Prabhudas's marriage.

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./III

[1] Jaisukhlal Amritlal Gandhi, a khadi worker
[2] Addressee's daughter

135. LETTER TO KESHAVRAM S. TRIVEDI

October 21, 1933

BHAI KESHAVRAM,

I have your letter. Please send the khadi to Shri Harakhchand Motichand through the Orissa Flood Relief Committee, Cuttack, Orissa.

Blessings from
BAPU

SHRI KESHAVRAM TRIVEDI
SUDDHA KHADI BHANDAR, NAVSARI

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./XXII

136. LETTER TO SHANKARLAL D. PARIKH

October 21, 1933

BHAI SHANKARLAL,

I received your letter a few days ago, but could not get time to reply to it. I cannot postpone doing so any longer, and so I write this. I hope Vanamala and Mohan have completely recovered now. I would advise you not to keep either of them in Kathlal. There was a letter from Narahari specially about them, and he also says that both of them must live with Anandi. It is desirable that they should get used to living with other people and have some experience. They will fall ill occasionally, no matter where they are. Of course if neither of them can be persuaded to go, I shall be helpless. But I think you should try and see if you can persuade them to go. So far as I know, Vanamala used to feel very happy with Anandi, but it is possible that Mohan may find it difficult to forget his attachment for Kathlal. But he has a simple heart and I think it will be easy for you to persuade him. If you have recently got any news about Narahari and Mani[1], please let me know. Also tell me what

[1] Narahari Parikh's wife

you are doing at present. You have preserved the love of neatness which I had observed in you.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a copy of the Gujarati: C.W. 2685

137. LETTER TO BHAGWANJI P. PANDYA

October 21, 1933

CHI. BHAGWANJI,

I got your previous letter, but I simply couldn't find time to reply to it. I had completely forgotten to write to you about the prices of raw and processed yarn. I have sent your letter to Bhai Shankerlal and asked for his comments. Perhaps he will talk with you, too.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a copy of the Gujarati: C.W. 363. Courtesy: Bhagwanji P. Pandya

138. INTERVIEW TO "UNATI"

[Before *October 22, 1933*][1]

Q. In spite of efforts on the part of social reformers, the standard of living of educated communities in Sind has been rising very rapidly; what would you advise under the circumstances?

A. I would advise those who think this is wrong to set an example by living simply and thinking and acting nobly.

Q. Young men believe that unless they are in a position to earn from Rs. 150 to 200 per month, they cannot even think of marriage. At the same time, an ever-increasing number of them keep on imagining that it is legitimate to satisfy sexual instinct in some way or another without undertaking the obligations of married life; how do you view such a mentality?

A. I can only look upon it with shame and deep regret. Such mentality can only lead to suicide. The only cure for it is for young men, who realize the enormity of the evil, to set their faces against it by showing the greatest purity in their own lives and correctness of conduct.

[1] The report was released to the Press from Hyderabad (Sind) on this date.

Q. What advice would you give to young girls who have perforce to remain unmarried or who are not in a mood to marry?

A. Such girls should go out of their little communities or even Provinces in search of suitable deserving companions. The sooner we get through the spirit of provincialism and exclusive caste, the better would it be for us. I cannot understand why an educated Amil should be in search of an Amil companion and why he or she should not take a deserving companion from any part of India, the condition being, not selfish gratification of base animal passions, but search after spiritual growth and national advancement.

Q. Would you not advise the Amil girls to break the barriers of Amilism and be prepared to marry any non-Amil—be he a Bhaibund or a Bhatia or any other? What are your views on inter-marriages between Sindhis and Gujaratis, etc.?

A. Already answered above.

Q. If you hold that "man and woman should be given fullest opportunity for self-expression", would you advise that young girls and young boys should be given unfettered discretion in mixing or associating with each other, irrespective of parents' knowledge or control? Also, should girls be allowed to move about as freely as boys do?

A. Most decidedly not. I believe in the middle path. Most boys and girls should be guided and allow themselves to be guided by their parents and guardians and the latter on their part should cherish and promote the independence of their boys and girls who may be under their guardianship or supervision. If the youth of the country will remain pure they should avoid all secretiveness.

Q. It is maintained by the old people that in view of the peculiar conditions obtaining in Sind, it is not safe to discard *purdah*, but young men are naturally against this system which they regard as highly pernicious. What would you suggest to avoid the clash on this point of difference between the young and the old?

A. I have never believed in the *purdah* system. I think it is fast going and the girls, who dare to tear the *purdah* and demonstrate to their neighbours that no harm has befallen them in any way whatever, will be most potent proofs for removing the prejudice or fear. Tearing down the *purdah* does not mean that girls should wander about anywhere and everywhere. It is the hiding of one's face in the presence of men which I consider to

be so highly injurious to one's growth or self-expression. Modesty is the best protection and *purdah*.

Q. What are your views on co-education?

A. I believe in well-regulated and well-thought-out co-education.

The Bombay Chronicle, 26-10-1933

139. TALK WITH A FRIEND[1]

[Before *October 22, 1933*]

You are aware of the agreement[2] among the so-called minority communities when the Round Table Conference was in progress in London. The Harijans also were included among them. I staked my life for them at that time.[3] Being a far-sighted man, I realized that since some sort of a constitution was coming, if the Government accepted the scheme contained in that agreement our relations with Harijans would come to an end and Hindu society would be permanently divided. Harijans would either separate from the rest of the Hindus and form a new community, or would merge in some other community; but they would not continue to belong to the Hindu fold. I saw that this would mean the destruction of Hinduism. It would be destroyed not because 60 million people would have left it, but because of the reasons driving them to that course. Anyone is free to abandon Hinduism if he so chooses, but we, the caste Hindus, should not be the cause of their doing so. I, therefore, felt that it was my dharma to prevent such a division even at the cost of my life.

Though I was in jail when the Award of the British Cabinet regarding electorates was published,[4] I still felt that I had no choice but to keep my pledge to oppose it. I, therefore, went on a fast unto death in September 1932.[5] People say now that, even if only incidentally, it rendered a great service to Hinduism. If you believe that I had taken the right step in opposing the British Cabinet's Award, all the other steps follow logically from it.

[1] This and the following item are from Chandrashankar Shukla's weekly letter. This appeared under the title "Why I Took Up Harijan Work".

[2] & [3] *Vide* Vol. XLVIII, pp. 293 and 298.

[4] On August 17, 1932; *vide* Vol. L, p. 383.

[5] *Vide* Vol. LI.

Q. Will you kindly explain that in more detail? By your fast in 1932 you did succeed in getting the scheme of separate electorates for Harijans altered, but what was the justification of the other steps?

A. The desire to get the Cabinet Award amended was merely the originating cause of the fast. But with its amendment a duty devolved on the caste Hindus. Hence, when Sir Purushottamdas[1] and Sjt. Ghanshyamdas visited me in jail, I told them that I would not be content merely with the amendment of the Cabinet Award and that the caste Hindus would have to do a great deal. Then I embodied this in the form of a resolution. It was passed at the Bombay Conference on September the 25th in almost the very words of my draft[2]. It was stated therein that from then on no one would be regarded as an untouchable in Hinduism and that all temples and other public places would be accessible to Harijans to the same extent that they were to the other Hindus. When all the leaders came to me after the Resolution was passed, I pledged my life to the Harijan leaders for the implementation of the Resolution. Hence it became incumbent upon me to take steps even in Yeravda jail. I corresponded with the Government to get the doors of the prison that had closed after that fast opened again, and told it that I would have to keep the caste Hindus awake to their duty, and that, therefore, I should not lose contact with them. As a result of the correspondence, the Government granted me full permission to carry on Harijan work from prison.[3] Then I noticed some impurity among the Harijan workers and in consequence I had to resort to the 21 days' fast. Then I was imprisoned again in August and asked for the same facilities as before. On their being refused, there followed another fast of 8 days.

Q. Can you say more about this impurity among the workers?

A. That fast was intended for the purification of the workers. I have given an illustration in *Harijan* to show when a purificatory fast becomes necessary.[4] Please refer to it. If such impurity creeps into us, religious reform would not spread among the crores of people and the irreligious practice of untouchability which has entered deep into our villages cannot be eradicated. I have already described the great conflict in my heart and the terrible

[1] Sir Purushottamdas Thakurdas

[2] *Vide* Vol. LI, p. 139.

[3] *Vide* Vol. LI, footnote 1, pp. 336-7.

[4] *Vide* "A Case for Fasting", pp. 71-3.

storm through which I had to pass before arriving at the decision to fast. I have not cited in *Harijan* all the instances of impurity that have come to my notice. I came to know a great many other things during and even after my fast. Many of the workers woke up and told me that they had considered themselves absolutely pure but they could now see the blemishes in them. I have already published the confession[1] of an overseer who had collected a pice each from the labourers. If I were to publish all such instances the pages of *Harijan* would start stinking. I have, therefore, refrained from doing so. We need not worry about purifying the world. But we can certainly expect that those who have dedicated their lives to Harijan work will always remain pure. Fasting is a very common thing in Hinduism, but other religions too have recommended fasting as a means for purification.

Q. Many people feel that your efforts to get the Temple-entry Bill[2] passed in the Assembly and sending Rajaji to Delhi with that aim was a violation of the principle of non-co-operation. Will you kindly explain your point of view?

A. The Congress principles are intended to facilitate its work. You know that in 1921 when the non-co-operation movement was in full swing a Congressman in Utkal had misappropriated some money, thinking that he would not be taken to a court of law since the Congress had boycotted them. When this thing was brought to my notice, I wired advising that they should have the man arrested. The rules of the Congress should not be such that they defeat its own aims. In the matter of temple-entry, I saw that there was a legal impediment, and that if we could not proceed further without getting it removed, we must do so, and bear with any short-sighted person who may see a contradiction in our action. Is there no difference between taking one grain of arsenic and 30 grains of it? Medicine should be used to cure a disease and not to commit suicide. It is the moral duty of those who passed the Bombay Resolution to take the help of the law, if necessary, to get the disabilities of Harijans removed. This is clearly stated in the Resolution. How can the supporters of that Resolution oppose this Bill? Or, why should they hesitate to take the help of members of the Assembly? We have not given but accepted co-operation. Supposing that the Government passes

[1] *Vide* Vol. LV, pp. 319-21.

[2] Introduced by Ranga Iyer in the Legislative Assembly; *vide* also Vol. LIII, footnote 3, pp. 14-5.

legislation enforcing complete prohibition; shall we say then that we do not want it?

[From Gujarati]

Harijanbandhu, 22-10-1933

140. SEATS FOR HARIJANS[1]

[Before *October 22, 1933*]

To say that Harijans will not be able to use their franchise properly and will not be able to understand the interests of the country is to lay the axe at the very root of the principles of democracy. It is like the imperialists telling us that we are not fit for democracy and will never learn the proper use of the franchise. Mistakes will always be made. We shall progress only through mistakes. But does it mean that we should not have the right to vote? Exercise of the right of voting will in itself be an education for Harijans. Nor would it be proper to say that they would not understand national interests. Their representatives would be persons elected with our own votes. For every Harijan seat, Harijans would elect four persons, and from among these four we shall have to elect one. Would we not find even one person from among them who would understand the nation's interests? If we really do not find such a person, then the fault would be ours for having neglected them to that extent. The right way is to embrace them and win over their hearts by serving them. It won't help to distrust them.

[From Gujarati]

Harijanbandhu, 22-10-1933

[1] This was Gandhiji's reply to some critics of the representation given to Harijans under the Yeravda Pact.

141. ANSWERS TO CORRESPONDENTS[1]

[Before *October 22, 1933*]

UNDYING MEMORY OF THE BELOVED[2]

I fully share your grief. Your letter reminds me that several friends of mine have been in the same condition as you. But I have seen from experience that our love for the beloved one is not for his or her body but for the immortal spirit dwelling in it. As the years pass, your memory of your wife will not grow dim in your heart, but will become stronger and richer. This thought should dispel your grief and give you deep joy and make you see what is real and what is unreal in life. If one individual can possibly share the experience of another, I wish that you would share my experience as I am sharing your grief.

GIFT OF DEATH[3]

If you have to depart, do so peacefully with the consciousness that you are going to your own home and with the Lord's name inscribed in your heart. If God wills to take some service from you through this very body of yours, He will save your life.

THE BEST USE OF THE ASHRAM

The Satyagraha Ashram has been permanently given away for Harijan work. I feel that this is the best use it can be put to. Since the Government did not take possession of it, there was no other equally good purpose for which it could have been used. This was also the best way of sacrificing the Ashram. Having regard to the ideals of the Ashram, everybody here feels that this is the best purpose for which it could be used. A special committee will be appointed to run it. It will not admit just any Harijan. Whoever is admitted will have to abide by the rules of the place. I see nothing wrong in the Ashram inmates being without a permanent abode and living anywhere contented with

[1] This appeared under the title "From the Mail-bag".

[2] This was in reply to a correspondent who had described his grief at the death of his wife and asked Gandhiji how he could cherish her memory so that it might be a source of joy without any shadow of grief.

[3] This was addressed to a woman who was on her death-bed.

whatever comes their way. When everything is over, we may set up another Ashram; that is the only proper course for us.

QUESTIONS FROM A HARIJAN WORKER[1]

I do not believe that many Harijan workers are taking more than what they need for their subsistence. Some of them take nothing at all. I do not know what is "fat salary" according to you. I consider him the best propagandist who takes only enough for his food and clothing. In our poor country we do not have a leisured class which would provide us national workers.

[From Gujarati]

Harijanbandhu, 22-10-1933

142. REGARDING MUNICIPALITIES, ETC.

A gentleman makes the following suggestion[2] regarding municipalities, local boards, etc.

I think this suggestion certainly deserves consideration. The municipalities themselves may not put the scheme into practice but where the local Harijan Sevak Sangh is prepared to take the responsibility, the school buildings should be made over to them outside school hours rent-free but on condition that the buildings and the furniture would be well looked after. This will save rent and Harijans will have the benefit of better accommodation and amenities.

[From Gujarati]

Harijanbandhu, 22-10-1933

[1] The worker had complained that most of the temples remained closed to Harijans, workers doing Harijan service drew fat salaries, khadi workers took no interest in Harijan work and that villages were steeped in ignorance and superstition.

Paragraphs 1, 3 and 4 of Gandhiji's answers are not translated here as they are covered by "An M.A. in a Hurry"; *vide* pp. 110-1.

[2] Not translated here. The suggestion was that civic bodies should run night schools for Harijans and encourage them with financial aid.

143. SOME MORAL POSERS

The gentleman who has made suggestions regarding the municipalities, etc., has asked the following questions which are useful for all workers.[1]

I would answer them in the following order:

(1) Any vow to be taken must be written out in precise terms. It should be done in the presence of a witness, if available at the time. If a doubt arises, it must be interpreted rigidly, not loosely. Nothing should be appended to it, under the excuse of being left out, which would weaken it. For instance, say, I pledge not to touch liquor. No country has been mentioned in this pledge. I then go to England and someone persuades me to take liquor on grounds of health. Now, I cannot argue that since I happened to be in India at the time of taking the pledge it applied only to my stay there and that I was free to take liquor while abroad. Nor can I permit myself to take liquor as a medicine on the ground that there was no mention of medicines in the pledge.

(2) As in the case of other activities, the time for prayer too must be fixed. It matters little what time is fixed for it. It is best to have it just before bed-time and on waking up in the morning after cleaning one's teeth. It is also necessary to have fixed hours of sleep. No one can achieve concentration of mind all at once. As the saying goes, "even hard black rocks can be cut with a rope." So concentration will automatically follow in the wake of regular praying. So long as this is not attained, one should diligently continue to pray every day rather than worry about it. "You should never accept defeat, even if you die."

[1] The questions are not translated here. The correspondent had asked:

(1) What are the factors to be considered before taking a vow and whether it can be modified afterwards?

(2) Can the fixed times of prayer be immediately after waking and just before retiring? How can one achieve concentration for a longer duration?

(3) What is the best method of writing a diary so that it becomes a guide for the future?

(4) Your elliptical style leaves many things unexplained. What precise efforts should one undertake to achieve concentration?

(5) Does the *Gita*, XII. 19 advocate absolute contentment? In fact can contentment be conditional?

(3) Never give up the practice of writing a diary once you have resolved to do so. If not immediately, you will certainly realize its advantages later. This habit itself will guard us against many of our shortcomings as the diary will be a permanent witness to these. All the slips must be noted in the diary. There is no need to condemn them. Criticism is always taken for granted. It is enough to mention, say, 'Today I was angry with B; today I deceived A.' There is no need to make observations like, 'This was very unfortunate,' 'Oh me! I must not repeat it.' Words in praise of oneself should never be there. It is enough to note down the work done and the slips committed. The diary should not take note of other people's faults.

(4) This question does not appear to be right. Neither the language of the *Gita*, nor my own, is aphoristic. It is not proper to compare my language with the *Gita's*; I would be happy if I could write the language of the *Gita*, but I am far removed from it. Whatever we read on a subject with which we have little familiarity, appears to us aphoristic. Technical language is language which is adequate for the purposes of that subject alone. To those who are not familiar with it, it sounds aphoristic. But this is one thing and the *sutras*[1] of Patanjali are another thing. The latter leave many things unsaid. This cannot be said of the *Gita*. But here the author gives a new connotation to familiar expressions, which makes them difficult to understand. My language has one quality, viz., brevity. However, it is imperfect, whereas the *Gita's* is perfect. When I say that my language is imperfect I do not imply that I have inadequate command over the language, although that too is true. What is implied here is that my thoughts are imperfect. Hence there is bound to be difficulty in understanding them. As my thoughts mature, they will come to be expressed so as to be easily comprehended. Having admitted this shortcoming in my language, I can still say that some readers do not make the fullest effort and then fail to understand even perfectly expressed ideas. And then they blame me! For example, let us take the instance cited by the correspondent himself. Spinning is a tangible activity; it can therefore be actually demonstrated. Agitation of the mind is intangible. It is quite correct to say that restlessness can be got over by practice. Today, we have no means for actually demonstrating [the truth of] this. If we learn to reduce our thought processes to a visual image we would be able to obtain a picture of this practice too as we do of spinning. At present we can only say

[1] *Yogasutras* enunciated by Patanjali

that mental restlessness can be got rid of through diligent praying. In this, one has to rely on the truthfulness of the student, i.e., his adherence to truth. Who can know a person who pretends to pray while continuing to be agitated? Or, who is there to rebuke the individual who deceives himself every day and while praying daily makes many impossible plans? In other words, the success of practice depends entirely upon the sincerity of the aspirant. If there is insincerity in spinning, it can be pointed out to the spinner, since it can be directly perceived.

(5) "You should be satisfied with whatever little you get" does not imply that a lazy person may rest satisfied with what he gets. The implication is that one should be satisfied with what one gets after making constant and sincere effort. That is to say that in addition to the utmost human effort, God in heaven has His say on the result. Hence, there is absolutely no need to be despondent if the effort does not appear to bear fruit. This is what the author of the *Gita* suggests.

[From Gujarati]

Harijanbandhu, 22-10-1933

144. LETTER TO MADHAVDAS AND KRISHNA KAPADIA

WARDHA,
October 22, 1933

CHI. MADHAVDAS AND KRISHNA,[1]

I got your letter. My blessings to you both. May you be happy and have peace of mind during this year.

The tour will commence on the 8th.

Ba knows your address, of course.

Ramdas is fine.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./XXII

[1] Kasturba Gandhi's brother and his wife

145. LETTER TO KANTI N. PAREKH

October 22, 1933

CHI. KANTI,

I was very happy to read your letter. My blessings to you and Jayanti for the new year. May both of you cultivate greater devotion to service and live long.

Prabhudas's marriage was celebrated here on Wednesday. The bride is from Bijnor, and excels even Prabhudas in simplicity. She is hard-working and seems good-natured. She is brave and loves serving people. She has no love for pleasures at all. Ramdas is doing fairly well. Keshu has joined a ginning mill. Krishnadas is in the khadi department. There are more than 40 girls here. The whole burden is being shouldered by Lakshmibehn and Dwarkanath. Things are going fairly well. Anandi, Bachu and Babu left for Ahmedabad only recently. Balabhadra and Dhiru Joshi are in Bhavnagar and deeply engrossed in the activities there. I think Indu will cling to the place. Dudhibehn lives in Bhavnagar and looks after the children.

I frequently hear from Devdas and Mahadev, and from Sardar also, of course. I had a letter today from . . .[1] too. Prithuraj[2] is at Calicut. He writes to me occasionally. Mani must have gone to Ahmedabad. Swami has come here today. Kishorelal and Gomati have returned to Akola.

My tour will commence on the 8th.

I think I have written enough now, haven't I? Make the best use of every moment. Write to me again if you can.

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

Mirabehn, Chandrashankar and Nayar will accompany me. At present Ba also is here. She leaves for [Yeravda] Mandir after a few days.

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 6276

[1] The source is illegible here.

[2] Son of Lakshmidas Asar

146. LETTER TO MANIBEHN PATEL

October 22, 1933

CHI. MANI,

I got your postcard. I will wait for you there on Wednesday. I do hope Baba will come. I hope you are improving. Swami arrived today. The rest on Wednesday.

Blessings from
BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro–4: Manibehn Patelne, p. 109

147. LETTER TO GANGA T. HINGORANI[1]

WARDHA,
October 22, 1933

DEAR SISTER,

Chi. Vidya[2] has read out to me your letter to Anand. You should stop worrying about the two of them. Anand and Vidya are no kids. Their ultimate welfare lies in our letting them do what they wish to. Anand will meet you. Please give him your blessing. Give up undue attachment. Vidya needs peace. She keeps fit here. She also learns a few things and is in good company. Mahadev[3] too is well. You need not be anxious on his score either. How long can grown-up children stay with their parents? They ought to have their freedom. Since God has endowed you with wealth you need not feel the necessity of physical service from Anand or Vidya. Moreover, Vidya is incapable of rendering physical service. She herself needs it.

Blessings from
MOHANDAS GANDHI

From a microfilm of the Hindi. Courtesy: National Archives of India and Anand T. Hingorani

[1] Mother of Anand T. Hingorani
[2] &[3] Anand T. Hingorani's wife and son

148. LETTER TO F. MARY BARR

October 23, 1933

CHI. MARY,

Great minds think alike. I was wondering why you would not take your meal here last evening. Of course you can take all your meals here. The liquidness has nothing to do with the indigestion. It points to the necessity of less protein. But you should take some time from me when you come.

Love.

BAPU

[PS.]

If the bowels have been sluggish and you feel any indigestion now, you may mix one portion of milk. Yes, three meals will be perhaps quite enough.

From a photostat: G.N. 6012. Also C.W. 3338. Courtesy: F. Mary Barr

149. LETTER TO JAWAHARLAL NEHRU

WARDHA,
October 23, 1933

MY DEAR JAWAHARLAL,

I had two wires one from you and the other from Krishna and Raja. Thank God. Mother's bravery commands my worship. I have pictured her to be a personification of quiet, dignified bravery and sacrifice, ever since I have met her.

One thing I have been forgetting to write to you. If ever you feel that you would like to call a meeting of the A.I.C.C., you must not hesitate to call it. You need not mind my disinclination. I am disinclined, because I feel it will make confusion worse confounded and mean waste of energy, time and money. But I may be quite wrong.

Love to you all.

BAPU

Gandhi-Nehru Papers, 1933. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

150. LETTER TO MITHUBEHN PETIT

October 23, 1933

CHI. MITHUBEHN,

I have offended you. But I am helpless.

I examined your samples. I will try to find buyers for them. I will also try if somebody agrees to buy up all your stock. You say that you are prepared to sell even at a loss. Let me know what you mean and how much loss you are prepared to put up with.

You had asked me for something in the nature of a letter of recommendation. I give it below.

God alone can reward you for the service you have been doing to the poor through khadi work and by running a dispensary. However, the country also will not forget the services of self-sacrificing women like you. It can show its appreciation of them best by welcoming them, taking up those causes and helping you in doing your work better. The people should know that, even if the khadi manufactured through your help is costly, every pie paid by them for it goes directly into the pockets of the poor. You don't want even a pie by way of profit. God has given you enough and you are not only satisfied with it but even spend from it for the benefit of the poor.

I hope you keep good health. My tour will commence on the 8th.

Blessings from
BAPU

[PS.]

Give me news about Jaiji and also her address.

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 2706

151. LETTER TO PADMA

October 23, 1933

CHI. PADMA,

I got your letter. I don't wish to take you with me during my tour just now. You should become more mature and settle down to something. After that, I may take you if I get a suitable opportunity. You must have read about Prabhudas's marriage. Several visitors have turned up and so I stop here.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 6146. Also C.W. 3501. Courtesy: Prabhudas Gandhi

152. LETTER TO F. MARY BARR[1]

WARDHA,
October 24, 1933

CHI. MARY,

If I knew where N. was, I would immediately wire her to return. I am in search but have failed so far.

Love.

BAPU

From a photostat: G.N. 6013. Also C.W. 3339. Courtesy: F. Mary Barr

[1] The letter was in reply to the addressee's request to be allowed to go and fetch N.

153. LETTER TO AMRITLAL V. THAKKAR

October 24, 1933

DEAR THAKKAR BAPA,

Herewith George Joseph's letter and a copy of my reply[1] to him.

Also herewith a letter of complaint against poor Bapineedu and a copy of my reply[2].

Yours sincerely,
BAPU

[PS.]

I got the letters regarding N. [*The National*] *Call* has done great injustice to her and S[3]. I have written to Sahani; I had expected his reply today.[4]

From a photostat: G.N. 1129

154. LETTER TO MATHURADAS TRIKUMJI

October 24, 1933

Why would I refrain from criticizing you for getting angry when I think it necessary to do so? . . .[5] But I certainly don't want you to apologize against your will. If I wouldn't force anybody else to do anything against his will, why should I force you? And would you tolerate me even if I tried? But I certainly have a right, and it is my duty as well, to criticize you whenever I feel it necessary to do so. . . .[6] A person apologizes not for the sake of the other party but for his own good. Among persons with equally virtuous character, age is a consideration. I close this chapter here. Forget all that I have written about the matter.

What connection has this affair with your becoming a trustee[7]? I was a party to the proposal for making you one of the

[1] &[2] These are not available.
[3] The name has been omitted.
[4] The postscript is in Gujarati.
[5] &[6] Omissions as in the source
[7] Of the Gandhi Seva Sangh

trustees. If I get a person better qualified than you, I would certainly withdraw your name. But I would remain neutral if we could think of another person as well qualified as you but not better.

[From Gujarati]

Bapuni Prasadi, p. 138

155. LETTER TO MOOLCHAND AGRAWAL

October 24, 1933

BHAI MOOLCHAND,

I have your letter. Teaching is the right vocation for you. Through it you may do what you can for khadi. But for that a thorough knowledge of the technique of khadi is essential.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 752

156. LETTER TO RAMA DEVI CHOWDHARY

October 24, 1933

DEAR SISTER,

I have your letter. If your son and daughter are keen on studies it would be the right thing to arrange for that. It would be excellent if they learn some vocation. It is impossible to have your son touring with me. The present tour is rather [difficult][1].

Blessings from
BAPU

SMT. RAMA DEVI CHOWDHARY[2]
CHANDNI CHOWK
CUTTACK, ORISSA

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 2782

[1] The original is damaged here.
[2] Wife of Gopabandhu Chowdhary

157. TRIBUTE TO VITHALBHAI PATEL[1]

October 24, 1933

Mr. Vithalbhai Patel's death[2] removes one of the most painstaking and ablest of politicians. His self-sacrifice and whole-hearted application to the work he undertook were beyond praise. His capacity for work was amazing. It has been truly said of him that whether as the President of the Bombay Corporation or of the Legislative Assembly, he cleared his desk every day, and never allowed arrears to grow. His death is a distinct loss to the country at this juncture. I cannot close this tribute without placing on record my deep appreciation of Mr. Subhas Chandra Bose's magnificent and devoted nursing of Vithalbhai at much risk to his own health.

The Hindu, 24-10-1933

158. LETTER TO JANAKDHARI PRASAD

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM, WARDHA,
October 25, 1933

DEAR JANAKDHARI BABU,

I have your sorrowful letter. You must not give way to grief as you have done. I hope you received my letter written to you on 15th inst. There need be no apology for writing to me. Do please write as often as you wish. You have every right to have my opinion and advice. If you can accept the advice I have given in my previous letter, it will solve all your difficulties.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat: G.N. 55

[1] Gandhiji paid this tribute in an interview to the Associated Press.
[2] On October 22

159. LETTER TO AMRITLAL V. THAKKAR

October 25, 1933

DEAR THAKKAR BAPA,

Here is a letter from Narasimhan[1] about the Southern tour. I do not know why Rajagopalachari wants me to tour in the South as early as possible. You will perhaps know. I am asking Narasimhan to ascertain the reason.

From your letter about N., I suspect that you think that I don't want to do anything with her, but that is not the case. I am anxious to have her. But she is so unhinged that she might not come at all. Anyway, I am telegraphing today to you and to the American Mission. I know that *The National Call's* references to S. are all unmerited and vicious. He has done no wrong to N. N. herself does not know why her passions were excited when she saw him at Sabarmati. In the letter in which she told me this, she had acquitted S. of all blame. Many women, like many men, often get excited over seeing some members of the opposite sex, and N., having led a life of complete abandon would naturally get excited. I am asking S. to see you so that you can make his acquaintance and know him. Now that you are in this case, it is much better for you to understand all the actors. It will help me also to have your estimate of these actors, for I have not seen the last of any of them.

I see that Ramnarayan cannot come for two months as Ramnath 'Suman' was asking to be allowed to replace him for two or three months. And it was a question whether you could agree and whether Ramnarayan would waive his claim in favour of Ramnath. I suppose you know him. He is quite capable and he will do all the work that you expect. Of course, Chandrashankar cannot possibly cope with the correspondence, editing, and drawing up newspaper reports.

I have a copy of your letter to Negi. You seem to have expected a reply from me to your letter about Biharilal, but in your letter enclosing his long letter to you you told me that you would write further about him. Naturally, therefore, I did not write, but I can now say generally that we may not create work for

[1] Son of C. Rajagopalachari

him. If there is work for which he is fitted, it should undoubtedly be given to him, even though similar work can be done for less wages than what might have to be given to him.

Yours sincerely,
BAPU

Encl. One letter[1]

From a photostat: G.N. 1130

160. LETTER TO VASUMATI PANDIT

October 25, 1933

CHI. VASUMATI,

I heard about you through Tara. She is expected here now. Surendra is here. He keeps good health, but seems to have lost considerable weight. Swami also is here. Mani and Mridula are expected today. Prabhudas has married a girl from North India. The marriage took place here. The girl's name is Amba. Both are still here. My tour will commence on the 8th. Ba, Mira, Chandrashankar and Nayar are with me. Ba is preparing to go to Mandir. Nanibehn, Gangabehn and Pannalal are in Ahmedabad. Write to me whenever you can. Do you read anything?

Blessings from
BAPU

SMT. VASUMATIBEHN PANDIT, PRISONER
DISTRICT PRISON, THANA
G.I.P. RLY.

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 9337. Also C.W. 583. Courtesy: Vasumati Pandit

[1] This is not available.

161. LETTER TO JANAKIDEVI BAJAJ[1]

October 25, 1933

DEAR SISTER,

I must congratulate you on your proposed visit to Calcutta for the purpose of ending the custom of *purdah* among the sisters there. *Purdah* is not only a superstitious obsession, I feel it also smacks of sin. *Purdah* from whom? Are all men steeped in lust? Cannot a woman retain her purity without observing *purdah*? Purity is a state of mind. It ought to come spontaneously to all men. In this age of reason women should serve *Daridranarayana* if they wish to protect their dharma. They should also educate themselves. Service of *Daridranarayana* implies propagation of khadi, spinning, etc. Harijan service implies washing off the stain of untouchability; both of these noble activities are God's work. And education can never be acquired while retaining the *purdah*.

Did Sita observe *purdah* in her wanderings with Rama in the forests? Has there ever been in the world a woman more virtuous than Sita? Exhort the women to end the custom and preserve dharma.

Yours,
MOHANDAS GANDHI

[From Hindi]
Panchven Putrako Bapuke Ashirvad, p. 118

[1] The addressee was to preside over the All-India Marwadi Women's Conference in Calcutta. This letter was meant to be a message for the delegates and was published in *Vishwamitra*, 29-10-1933.

162. LETTER TO F. MARY BARR

October 26, 1933

CHI. MARY,

A 'tragedy of errors'. The man who brought the first note said no answer was required. Now Madan Mohan sends a reminder.[1] Do please both of you come at 4 p.m.

Love.

BAPU

From a photostat: G.N. 6014. Also C.W. 3340. Courtesy: F. Mary Barr

163. LETTER TO JAWAHARLAL NEHRU

WARDHA,
October 26, 1933

MY DEAR JAWAHARLAL,

Herewith resignation from Dr. Alam. I have told him that it should have been sent to you. I advise its acceptance. It arises out of a letter of bitter complaint received against him from Lahore. I sent him a copy of it. He strictly denied some of the charges made therein. But accepted the one about practice.

Jamnalalji is anxious about his resignation. My own opinion is that his too should be accepted. He is anxious to go to prison but it worries him that he does not go at once.

I suppose Krishna is now in Bombay.

I see nothing in the papers about Mother nowadays. Is she better?

Vithalbhai's death was fully expected by me but the actuality is disturbing me. His very opposition I valued. It cleared my mind and enabled me to put my position more clearly before the country than I otherwise could have.

[1] The addressee has prefaced this letter with the following note in her book *Bapu*: "I wrote a note asking Gandhiji if I might bring to see him an English friend, who was passing through Wardha, and for once, had received no reply. So I sent a reminder with a man who was going to the Ashram."

Love.

BAPU

Encl.

Gandhi-Nehru Papers, 1933. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

164. LETTER TO ABBAS TYABJI

October 26, 1933

MY DEAR OLD BEARD,

Your letter about Kamala does credit to you. As I have to advise her, I was bound to know the reasons for your opinion. You have given me the straightest opinion. Raihana holds the contrary opinion. Yours is based largely on instinct and so is Raihana's. My instinct too has been against her. But I have refused to act on my instinct in the face of her emphatic contradictions. Of course I brought my own suspicions to her notice.

I hope you had a successful time in Amreli. Did it do much good? Did you sell much khadi? Were you able to do some substantial Harijan work?

Love to you all.

Yours,
BHRRR

From a photostat: S.N. 9588

165. LETTER TO G. D. BIRLA

October 26, 1933

MY DEAR GHANSHYAMDAS,

I must dictate in English in answer to your letter written in Hindi.

It was not necessary to write more about the constitution of the Harijan Seva Sangh. Whether we should immediately bring into being a semi-democratic organization is a question for consideration. I do not know whether under the appointment there is the power, but the plan that I have suggested[1] is feasible and can be enforced immediately, that is, to register the Ashram in the names of the trustees that I have suggested. You should discuss your idea with Thakkar Bapa and Hariji.

[1] *Vide* "Letter to G. D. Birla", pp. 41-3.

As to the Spinners' Association, I had an absolutely free hand, and I evolved a plan which enabled it to become an easily operating and sound organization with immense possibility for democratization. I wanted to write to you as soon as the decision for the transfer of the Ashram was taken, that, in view of that acquisition, the ambitious plan for Delhi should be abandoned. But the hostel scheme is quite sound. Of course, we shall want many such hostels; and I can see immense possibilities emerging from them, if they are properly managed. When I am in Delhi you may take any work you like from me.

So far as Biharilal is concerned, if he will serve in connection with the hostel schemes and so on, we can utilize his services. But I am very much against engaging paid preachers, Harijans or otherwise. And in this matter we cannot be too firm.

As to my stay in Delhi, of course, it is to be regulated by you. My own inclination would be to stay at Lakshminarayan's[1] place. I believe in sticking to old places, except on sound reasons for a departure. For my health Parmeshwari's place would be ideal. But I must not be made inaccessible. To do so would defeat the purpose of the tour. My stay should depend upon the work to be taken from me. You will come to wrong decisions, if you always think of my convenience. You can depend upon it that I shall make my own convenience, no matter where you put me. For my stay in Calcutta, you should consult Dr. Bidhan, Satish Babu, etc.

I understand what you say about Mrs. Lahiri. I did not give any opinion, because I had none. As she had mentioned your name and as you know almost everybody in Calcutta, I thought I would forward that letter to you and have your opinion. I have written to Dr. Bidhan also who has issued the certificate. You may dismiss the matter from your mind for the time being at least. If I form any opinion in the execution of which I need your assistance, I shall immediately let you know.

Yours sincerely,
BAPU[2]

[PS.]

Gopi is doing well. She is certainly happy. How is your health?[3]

C.W. 7938. Courtesy: G. D. Birla

[1] Lakshminarayan Gadodia
[2] The signature is in Devanagari script.
[3] The postscript is in Hindi.

166. LETTER TO AMRITLAL V. THAKKAR

October 26, 1933

DEAR THAKKAR BAPA,

I have copies of your two letters to Parikshitlal[1].

What you have heard is quite true. The grass has been given to a shepherd. I believe that some earnest money has been received, which will have to be transferred to the Society. And nominal rent is to be recovered from Ramji[2] and others who are already residing there. I believe that there is a full map of the Ashram. I am asking Chimanlal to write to you about it. Herewith a letter from Budhabhai as to what he will do. Juthabhai is already, I believe, living in the Ashram and so also Bhagwanji. It must be Juthabhai's business to see to the proper upkeep of the ground and the premises. The trees are a most valuable part of the estate.

You have asked Parikshitlal to give you draft rules. Evidently my letter sending you a copy of these was not received by you when you sent your letter.

I enclose herewith a letter received from Dr. Bidhan in connection with the collections. You may destroy the letter after reading it.

Yours sincerely,
BAPU

[PS.]

You have done well in going to N.'s rescue.[3]

Encls. 2 letters

From a photostat: G.N. 1131

[1] Parikshitlal L. Majmudar

[2] A weaver

[3] The postscript is in Gujarati.

167. "HARIJAN" IN MADRAS

The reader must have been surprised to see the transfer of *Harijan* publication from Poona to Madras. Sjt. R. V. Sastri and Mrs. Sastri have dedicated themselves to Harijan service. Sjt. Sastri felt that in Poona he was not able to give full service to the cause and that in Madras he would be able to make use of all the talents God had bestowed upon him. The argument went home to me. The result is the transfer of *Harijan* to Madras. What will happen or can happen after 3rd August next need not worry the reader or me. 'One step enough for me' is as true of organizations as of individuals. The additional advantage of the transfer to Madras is that Madras is the most advanced and cheapest city in all India for English printing. And what can be better than that *Harijan* should be published in a Presidency where untouchability flourishes in all its unshapeliness? I entertain the hope that the transfer will not only be welcomed but appreciated by the reformers, the sanatanists and the Harijans in the South. *Harijan* is designed to serve all these three. An easy test of appreciation will be an increased circulation.

Harijan, 27-10-1933

168. A TRAGEDY

The longer I live the more do I realize that the happiness which I enjoy and which so many friends envy persists in spite of tragedies of which I have always had my due share. The latest is the disappearance of N. I have no doubt that her repentance was sincere. She struggled bravely against her past, but it did appear to me on my coming to Wardha that the struggle was getting too severe for her. She was becoming unhinged and losing control over herself. Previously, in one of her letters from Wardha, she had hinted that she might become insane. All the affection that could be shown to her was shown. She was never insensible to it. She was most responsive. But she was also most impulsive. She has gone away without any money or belongings. The reports published about her in the Delhi Press are sensational manufactures and do her grave injustice. She cannot

be held responsible for her actions in her present mental state. Her proper place is in a philanthropic institution or in an asylum. Those who will throw a few silver pieces at her out of false compassion, or in order to get rid of her, will do her no kindness. Being irresponsible, she has been squandering what she has received. I would esteem it a favour if those who may come in contact with her will give me her address and show this writing to her.

Harijan, 27-10-1933

169. *KHADI AND HARIJANS*

Very few people have any notion of what khadi means to Harijans. Simple weaving is almost an exclusive speciality of Harijans, and even though mill spinning and weaving have deprived many Harijans of a source of livelihood, thousands of them are still dependent upon weaving. But a friend argues: "What is the use of keeping alive a perishing industry? Why not give them instead an industry that may be growing? Surely, you do not intend to confine them to worn-out occupations even when you are devising all manner of means for their uplift otherwise." Indeed, I have no desire to confine Harijans, or for that matter, anybody, to spinning and weaving or to any one occupation, if they can be more profitably employed in any other; only I do not take the gloomy view of hand-spinning and weaving which the objector takes. I personally believe that hand-ginning, hand-carding, hand-spinning and hand-weaving have a brilliant future, at least in India. If the millions are to live with any degree of comfort, the mills must seek main custom outside India. The villagers must be induced to supplement their scanty resources by hand-spinning, hand-weaving, etc., assuming that millions of villagers could be better employed, for the indigenous mills to supply all the needs of the nation means long delay—several generations—and then, too, it must mean the need of big capital and dependence for machinery and technical skill upon foreign countries. In the abstract, whilst there may be nothing wrong in depending upon foreign machinery and foreign skill, in practice it cannot but be a terrible handicap upon the mill industry. So long as this industry has got to depend upon external help, it would be untrue to call it an indigenous industry.

On the other hand, khadi, as a village industry, requires very little capital. The implements can all be manufactured in the villages themselves, and there is no lack of indigenous technical

skill. The only thing necessary is to change the mentality of the people. In spite, therefore, of the most skilful arguments to the contrary, and of imposing statistics with regard to the output of mills, I remain confirmed in my opinion that khadi in India has a very big future. What we may not do voluntarily and out of conviction, we shall be obliged to do through force of circumstances. India has to live, that is, her millions have to live. There is no difference of opinion as to the fact that they are not living today. They are merely existing. There is no other country in the world where so many million of people have only partial employment and where, in spite of the civilization being predominantly rural, the holdings are barely two acres per head. To manufacture the whole of her cloth requirements through steam or electricity, or any other than the human power behind the wheel, is still further to deepen the unemployment of the population. An industrialized India must, therefore, mean utter extinction of many millions, including, naturally, Harijans, who occupy, to our utter shame, the lowest strata of society.

It is said that through highly industrialized processes every American owns what is equivalent to 36 slaves. If we use America as our model, and if we allowed only 30 slaves to every Indian instead of 36, out of our 31 crores of human beings, 30 crores must perform *hara-kiri* or be killed off. I know that some enthusiastic patriots will not only not mind such a process, but they will welcome it. They will say that it is better to have one crore of happy, contented, prosperous Indians, armed to the teeth, than to have 30 crores of unarmed creatures who can hardly walk. I have no answer to that philosophy, because, being saturated with the Harijan mentality, I can only think in terms of the millions of villagers and can only make my happiness dependent upon that of the poorest amongst them, and want to live only if they can live. My very simple mind cannot go beyond the little spindle of the little wheel which I can carry about with me from place to place and which I can manufacture without difficulty. In this connection a friend sends me the following paragraph[1] which is going round the Press:

> To relieve unemployment in certain industries the Nazis have ordered the stoppage of the use of machines which were displacing human labour. Commenting on this interdiction the *Manchester Guardian* remarks: 'There has been a great deal of discussion about the effects

[1] From which only extracts are reproduced here

> of machinery in aggravating the unemployment crisis, but it has been left to the Nazis to do the logical thing and stop using it. . . . Mr. Gandhi's efforts to replace the spinning frame by the hand-wheel and the mechanical loom by the hand-loom are being paralleled closely in the German cigar and glass industries.'

The *Guardian* concludes its remarks by observing that, if Germany's 'ethics become mediaeval, there is no reason why her economics should not become mediaeval also'. Replying to these comments, a correspondent writes in the *Guardian*:[1]

> Hitler, Gandhi and others who in different ways are endeavouring to slow production to a point at which all goods are consumed may be reverting to mediaeval methods, but handicrafts are neither retrograde nor barbaric. They are taught in every progressive elementary and secondary school. . . . So long as machinery promotes the happiness and the prosperity of the masses as well as the classes it is a beneficent agent. But when it leads to the unemployment and starvation of millions, as is happening in the highly industrialized countries of the West, it becomes a curse. Machinery exists for man, and not *vice versa,* and must be made subservient to the well-being of the people and should not be allowed to become their master.

That the village industries in Germany are being revived at the point of the sword is not relevant here. What is relevant is that a country, which has shown the highest technical skill and is amongst the most advanced in the matter of industrialization, is trying to go back to village industries for solving the problem of her terrible unemployment.

Harijan, 27-10-1933

170. LETTER TO AMRITLAL V. THAKKAR[2]

WARDHA,
3 a.m., October 27, 1933

Totaramji tells me that you know him. Many Harijans also know him very well. But running the Harijan Ashram or Mandir or Nivas, whatever you call it, is to be your responsibility. You should, therefore, follow your own plan. Treat me as an adviser only. I made the suggestion as is my wont and I may make many

[1] Only extracts from the letter are reproduced here.
[2] Gandhiji added this to the letter written by Chandrashankar Shukla.

more such suggestions. Please remember that you are not bound to accept any of them.

Your going out in search of N. has deeply impressed me. Though I have had sufficient experience of your concern for others, your boundless compassion for N. fills me with the deepest admiration. Other friends have roundly blamed me for going out of my way to help her. You, on the contrary, seem to have got annoyed by my apparent indifference on this occasion. I bow to you in reverence a thousand times. Where my love has failed, may yours succeed in melting her heart. I understood your point in what you said regarding Utkal in your letter to Chandrashankar.

BAPU

[PS.]

I wish you would now finish off the task of selecting a name for the Harijan Ashram in consultation with Ghanshyamdas.

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 1132

171. LETTER TO MOTILAL ROY

October 27, 1933

DEAR MOTIBABU,

I was wondering why in reply to my postcard I had not heard from anyone about you. The delay has been more than made up for by your long and affectionate letter.

Let us be thankful that one eye remains for the present. But, as you say, if God wills it that the other eye should also go, He shall be praised.

I was sorry to hear of Swami Brahmanand's death. Death is a never failing friend. He comes to our assistance sometimes even when he is least expected. And it is our want of faith that makes us feel sorry when he comes.

I am glad you are prosecuting your khadi programme with an ever increasing faith.

When I travel in Bengal I shall be travelling like a prisoner under custody, going wherever my keepers would take me; and if they take me to your Ashram I should be, of course, delighted. You will, therefore, settle with the Head Jailor, Dr. Bidhan Roy; or you may write to the Asstt. Jailors, Satcowri Babu or Satis Babu.

As to Jawaharlal's views, did you not see the letters we have exchanged?[1] I have there definitely shown where I agree with him and where I disagree. But, if there are any specific points on which you desire my opinion more clearly than I have expressed, do please write to me without the slightest reservation.

Love to you. Mirabehn sends love.

Yours,
BAPU

SJT. MOTILAL ROY
CHANDRANAGAR

From a photostat: G.N. 11046

172. LETTER TO VALLABHBHAI PATEL

October 27, 1933

BHAISHRI VALLABHBHAI,

It is three days since Mani, Mridu, her uncle and Babo arrived. Babo doesn't feel shy with me this time. His health also is fine. He and I play on the Japanese sadhu's drum. The sadhu is a jewel. He is extremely frank, humble, cheerful and courteous. He is learning Hindi. He also spins on the charkha and the *takli*. He observes all the rules scrupulously. I have given many hours to both the young women. This morning I gave nearly two hours. I will give more time still at 11.30. They have come in great haste and are in equally great haste to return. They have, therefore, given me notice that they intend to return today by the Mail train. Mani's leg seems to require electric treatment and Mridu has to attend on some women who are ill. The two have formed an excellent pair.

. . .[2]

Pattabhi[3] was here. I hardly met him for ten minutes. He had turned up without intimation. Jamnalalji rarely permits anybody much time with me. Even to the representatives of mill-workers [from Ahmedabad] he permitted one and a half hours in all in three sessions. He guards me with the strictest vigilance.

I was certainly grieved by Vithalbhai's death, though for himself it was a deliverance. We had well known that he would

[1] *Vide* Vol. LV, pp. 426-30 and Appendix XIV.
[2] Omission as in the source
[3] Pattabhi Sitaramayya

die in a foreign country. He seems to have been looked after very well. Subhas, it seems, was beyond all praise. From all sources I hear reports of his wonderful attention to Vithalbhai. I have written to him. You also should write. My letter was posted before the news of Vithalbhai's death was received.

Swami will remain here for some time yet. Thakkar Bapa has gone to Brindaban in search of N. His compassion has no limit. The woman is out of her mind. She never misbehaved here. She had gone insane. She has still not come out of the woods. If she comes back, I will take her in again. Amala is working hard at present. Duncan has buried himself in a village. Mary Barr is still here. She has recovered from her illness. Vinoba has been doing wonderful work for Harijans in villages.

Mani has gone with Anandi. Bablo has left too.

Devdas writes to me regularly. Dr. Datta paid him a visit. Khurshed[1] seems to be a little ill. I have written to Dr. Datta and asked him to see her too. Do not worry about my tour. I will take care of my health. It is Rajaji's wish that I should tour the South first. Anandi went and saw Lakshmidas. She is firm in her resolution not to marry [just now]. Give my blessings to Chandulal.

Blessings from
BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro–2: Sardar Vallabhbhaine, pp. 36-8

173. TELEGRAM TO ADWAIT KUMAR GOSWAMI

WARDHA,
October 28, 1933

ADWAIT KUMAR
RADHARAMAN MANDIR
BRINDABAN

DO TAKE N. TEMPLES IF SHE WISHES.

GANDHI

From a photostat: G.N. 806

[1] Dadabhai Naoroji's grand-daughter

174. LETTER TO MUNNALAL G. SHAH

October 28, 1933

BHAI MUNNALAL,

I got your letter. If you wished to live with me, why didn't you say so all these days? It is not proper for you to feel unhappy as you do. You cannot accompany me on my tour. If you sincerely wish to stay in one place and work, you may work under Vinoba or Jamnalalji. But I am afraid you will not be able to stick to any place. If you can disprove my fear, I should like you to do so. I know you very well.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 8646

175. LETTER TO VALLABHBHAI PATEL

October 28, 1933

BHAI VALLABHBHAI,

There was a wire from Subhas today saying that Vithalbhai's body will reach Bombay on the 9th and that you should perform the cremation rites. I have replied through the Press that I don't believe it likely that you will make a request to be released and that the rites should be performed without you, by Dahyabhai. There was no time to consult you, nor did I think it proper to do so. If you have anything to say, please let me know. I am writing to Dahyabhai.

I hope you got the letter which I wrote to you yesterday regarding Kaka's fast. Today is the third day. There has been no loss of weight so far. He continues to work in bed. He is quite cheerful. . . .[1] is still here. But I don't think we can expect anything from him.

Prabhudas and Amba seem to be happy.

Blessings from
BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro–2: Sardar Vallabhbhaine, p. 38

[1] The name is omitted in the source.

176. LETTER TO JAISHREE RAIJI

October 28, 1933

DEAR SISTER,

You bring credit to your father[1]. The training you have had in a diplomat's family has not been fruitless. You have remained non-committed till the last. All right, apply to the Harijan Seva Sangh there if you have not done so, and send me a copy of the application. I will then do what I can.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a facsimile of the Gujarati: *Bapujini Shital Chhayaman*, facing p. 9

177. LETTER TO MATHURADAS TRIKUMJI

October 28, 1933

Nobody has complained so much against your nature that I should think you to be an unworthy man.[2] Is it likely that I would think well or ill of you on the basis of what somebody might tell me? Can I know you only through what others say about you? Wake up from your slumber. Come here and lighten your heart. It makes me unhappy to think that you are unhappy.[3]

[From Gujarati]

Bapuni Prasadi, pp. 138-9

[1] Sir Manubhai Mehta, Dewan of Baroda State

[2] Gandhiji had proposed the addressee's name for trusteeship of the Gandhi Seva Sangh.

[3] *Vide* also pp. 135-6.

178. A TEACHER'S DOUBTS

A teacher was somewhat puzzled while explaining to his students my writings under *Mangal Prabhat*[1] and he has asked certain questions regarding them. Here is the first one:[2]

My experience to date suggests that one's good lies in following the path which appears right to oneself. One has to discover for oneself the path followed by great men, and find for oneself who are great men. A great man who appears a paragon to one individual may seem worthless to another. There have been cases in which two individuals both regarding the same person as an authority interpret his words and actions in two opposite ways. The story of Virochana and Indra[3] is well known. At every step 'I' comes to the forefront. But the task is not accomplished even by my saying this. It cannot be claimed that what occurs to us is always the truth. What appears to me as truth today, may appear to be untruth after a couple of days. What is regarded as truth by a few has often been denounced by many. Hence we come to this terrible conclusion: Man can have a glimpse of truth only after making mistakes, stumbling on the way and treading dangerous paths.

However, all this perplexity arises from a disregard of the prerequisites for the quest of truth. Entitlement and eligibility are as much essential in the case of truth as in any other. The person who wishes to see Truth in the form of God must observe the *yamaniyamas*[4]. Anyone who has not thus attained eligibility lacks the "insight"; he is as good as blind. Anyone who claims to have seen truth without so much as trying to develop the eye for catching a glimpse of it would look as ludicrous as one who presumes to impart knowledge of astronomy without having studied it.

[1] A collection of Gandhiji's articles on Ashram observances written from the Yeravda Central Prison; *vide* Vol. XLIV, footnote on p.40.

[2] The question, not translated here, was whether the better course was to follow the path of truth according to one's own lights or to follow in the footsteps of great men.

[3] *Chhandogyopanishad*, VIII. 7

[4] Rules and regulations enjoined by Shastras for spiritual aspirants

The teacher's second question is as follows:[1]

In saying "We have come to the border-line, etc.', my only intention was to say that we could now have an easy access to the subject. While discussing truth, we inevitably come to non-violence. That there can be no truth without non-violence has been proved to be as plain as the fact that two and two make four.

The teacher's third question is as follows:[2]

The sentence quoted here is a good example of my inadequate expression. I remember having some difficulty while drafting the article. I could not find the words I was looking for. However, if my condition is pitiable, the teacher's is no less so.

We all go on chanting the word 'non-violence' but little do we inquire into its true nature. We do not act in accordance with what it has been described to be, hence the language used with reference to it seems like a Chinese puzzle. The teacher has used expressions like 'destroying', 'facing', 'difficulties', 'suffering', 'winning them over', etc., but they have failed to reveal their full meaning to him. His very language suggests it. I do not regard this as his failing. This imperfection is almost universal.

By saying all this, I have put before the reader my difficulty and our ignorance of the subject. I believe I quite understand what I want to say, but I have not yet struck upon the language which would aptly convey my meaning. But I shall not accept defeat. Success is sure to come with repeated efforts.

Non-violence does not destroy, it sustains. Hence it meets 'difficulties' by overcoming them. My yarn often gets entangled. If I cut it off, so much yarn goes waste. Cutting it off is easy and the process is over in no time. But, it does not lead me to truth. I 'face' the knot by disentangling it, which is time-consuming. But it saves the yarn and I learn a lesson in patience. When the knot is disentangled, my joy knows no bounds. I clear the way for other spinners. I add to my knowledge. I find that the time spent was not wasted, and thus I learn that the apparently easy and quick method of cutting up the knot was not correct and therefore not quick either. While disentangling the knot, not only did I face the difficulty but by living with it

[1] It was: "In the concluding part of your article on 'Truth' you say, 'We have come to the border-line beyond which lies ahimsa.' Do you mean that the former is a means to the latter?"

[2] It read: "What do you mean when you say that one makes progress by putting up with difficulties, not by counteracting them? What is your definition of non-violence in the restricted sense?"

after having accepted it as such, I also learnt that I was the author of it. The responsibility for its coming into being rested with me.

I believe I have shown through the above example how many virtues are acquired by suffering in this manner. I think other instances too could be easily interpreted to yield the essence of my writings. Examples will be readily available. But this does not imply that all the problems of non-violence are capable of being solved. Or that somebody has all the keys. This philosophy has not yet reached perfection. Could any be said to have done so? The knowledge of the scientist seems to be no more than the growing realization of his own ignorance. Non-violence is an abstruse science. We shall have to make many experiments, many people will have to sacrifice themselves. All that can be said with certainty at present is that non-violence appears to be the only straight and the shortest path to realization of God in the form of Truth. For a long time we have been treading the path of violence, but we seem to be going farther away from truth.

The killing of lower animals, small insects and even plants involves violence and is, therefore, sinful too. Nothing that is embodied can continue to do so without committing sin. From the worldly standpoint, however, the minimum inevitable violence committed for preserving the body is not regarded as sin.

We can now define violence in its narrow connotation. The wilful, wanton or arbitrary destruction of any living organism even smaller than an insect, is violence; not wishing, committing or abetting it is non-violence.

[From Gujarati]

Harijanbandhu, 29-10-1933

179. LETTER TO ANAND T. HINGORANI

WARDHA,
October 29, 1933

MY DEAR ANAND,

You must get rid of this malaria fiend root and branch. I do hope you did not overtax yourself in going to Multan. Vidya is opening out. She is no longer moody; has walks with me. She likes the club arrangement. She is keeping good health and so is Mahadev. You are not to have any anxiety about her. She is absorbing herself in useful service today. She is doing some serving for me. She is having her English lessons regularly. She got me to write to your mother a long letter.[1] She churned her butter for the first time today. Therefore trust her to God.

Love.

BAPU

From a microfilm. Courtesy: National Archives of India and Anand T. Hingorani

180. LETTER TO KANTI PAREKH AND JAYANTI PAREKH

October 29, 1933

CHI. KANTI, JAYANTI,

I got your postcard. I think both of you have acquired useful capital. Take care of your health. Maintain the utmost purity of character. Write to me whenever you can. Kakasaheb is here. Today is the fourth day of his fast. He has taken a vow for a fast of seven days. He will break the fast at 1.15 on Thursday. His health is good. The fast is for atonement of sin. Surendraji and Durbari look after him. Prabhudas takes down what he dictates. He is extremely cheerful. He can drink sufficient quantity of water and so there is no trouble. Kishorelal and Gomatibehn are at Akola. They will go to Bombay at the end of this month.

The condition of Ramabehn Joshi's arm can be described as fairly satisfactory now. She will come here tomorrow and then

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Ganga T. Hingorani", p. 131.

stay here. More and more girls are joining the Ahsram here. The daily programme for them is craft for four hours and study for four hours. Marathi is a compulsory subject of study.

Balkrishna is experimenting with milk diet for building up good health. He fasted for four days and lived for another four days only on fruit. Now he only drinks milk, not even water. Today is the third day since he started drinking milk. He increases the quantity daily by half a pound. Today he will drink three pounds. We may not predict the result just now.

Swami Anand is here. All of them will be here only for a few days now. Kumarappa came and went back.

Vinoba has composed the following verse[1] enumerating the eleven vows. It is sung daily once or twice.

> Ahimsa, truth, non-stealing, *brahmacharya*, non-possession;
> Body labour, control of the palate and complete freedom from fear:
> Equal regard for all religions, swadeshi and looking upon all human beings as touchables:
> These eleven vows one should observe, with humility and resolve.

Mani and Bablo left with Anandi. Vanamala and Mohan must have joined them from Kathlal.

Totaramji and Hariprasad[2] are here. They will be sent to Sabarmati for Harijan work.

Vithalbhai's body will reach Bombay on the 9th. It will be carried to the cremation ground with due honours and Dahyabhai will light the funeral pyre. Manibehn and Mridulabehn were here and stayed for three days.

If in giving all this news I have repeated any details, I hope you will remember that I have grown old and forgive me. If I remembered all the letters which I write, I would be crushed by the weight of that memory itself. Just as the power of memory is worth preserving, so also the ability to forget is worth cultivating. If we don't have it, we would always be either laughing or crying. However, this was a little sermon by the way. Instead of omitting any news, would it not be better to take the risk of repeating some details?

And now replies to your questions. What you say is perfectly true. "What can physical control avail?"[3] Can we force anyone to remain unmarried? Devdas and Prabhudas remained

[1] The verse is in Marathi.

[2] Adopted son of Totaram Sanadhya

[3] *Bhagavad Gita*, III. 33. *Vide* also Vol. XXXII, pp. 181-2.

so till the age of 32, and married only when they found that they could no longer control themselves. Is it not better that one should humbly admit one's weakness rather than let the mind run after lustful thoughts? I can testify that both of them tried hard to remain unmarried.

> He who curbs the organs of action but allows the mind to dwell on the sense-objects—such a one, wholly deluded, is called a hypocrite.[1]

If, then, both of them humbly express their desire to marry, it would be violence on my part to refuse them my blessings. They will continue to cherish the ideal of *brahmacharya*. One should strive hard to live up to an ideal, but if, despite one's best efforts, one cannot control one's mind, it would be better to be content with what one can do rather than live as a hypocrite. Anybody who acts in this manner deserves the blessings of his elders. One should stretch one's limbs, as the saying is, according to the length of the covering. In short, he who does not deceive himself or the world goes forward in the end. If I have not succeeded in explaining this idea, you may put me your questions when you get an opportunity.

I have had no letter from Indu recently, but Keshu had one. He is quite happy. Balbhadra and Dhiru also are with him. Manibhai Kothari is in Wadhwan. He is doing Harijan and khadi work there. My tour will commence on the 8th. I have already given you the names of the persons who will accompany me. The name of Ramnath 'Suman' should be added to the list. He is a lover of Hindi literature, and a good writer. He wishes to join the Ashram, ultimately.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 6275

[1] *Bhagavad Gita*, III. 6. *Vide* also Vol. XXXII, pp. 149-50.

181. LETTER TO DR. M. S. KELKAR

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM, WARDHA,
October 30, 1933

DEAR DR. KELKAR,

Will you put down as briefly as you can the reasons for your asking patients under milk treatment to drink as much water as milk you prescribe for them? I hope your experiments are prospering there.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat: G.N. 6108. Also C.W. 3301. Courtesy: M. S. Kelkar

182. LETTER TO JAWAHARLAL NEHRU

October 30, 1933

MY DEAR JAWAHARLAL,

I have your letter about the Hospital[1]. You ought to be able to say without fear of contradiction that the Swaraj Bhawan Dispensary is a perfect fraud and thoroughly boycotted. Without absolute proof, I am disinclined to believe that they fabricate cases. I am anxious to have this evidence, because it is necessary for framing my opinion about the Congress Hospital, for, I feel that we should be able to take possession of the Swaraj Bhawan strictly for Hospital work, if the Government management has proved to be a fiasco. If you think that the Congress Hospital or Dispensary should be run in the place where it is now being run and that no attempt whatsoever should be made to regain

[1] A hospital run by the Congress in the Swaraj Bhawan was taken over by the Government in 1931. After some time the British authorities "more for show than for anything else" decided to keep a dispensary open for the public. "But", the addressee wrote, "there is no evidence that even a single member of the public has ever taken advantage of it. . . . I am told false entries are made in their books to show that many patients are being treated." After the seizure of this hospital, the Congress had started another which from April 1932 was being run in a cottage adjoining the Swaraj Bhawan. The resources to run the Congress Hospital had been "almost exhausted".

possession of the Swaraj Bhawan, an appeal certainly becomes necessary and then it should be issued in the names of Mohanlal Nehru[1] and Kamala.

I am glad that Mother is making steady progress. Evidently the successful conclusion of the marriage ceremony has also something to do with easing the mental strain she was having.

Andrews is expected here on Wednesday.

I understand what you say about Jamnalalji. When do you think it may be safely announced?

Thakkar Bapa writes saying that you have prohibited Congressmen from working for Harijan cause, even though they may not be offering civil resistance. Where is the truth! I have known nothing about any such embargo.

Love.

BAPU

Gandhi-Nehru Papers, 1933. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

183. *LETTER TO MATHURADAS TRIKUMJI*

October 30, 1933

Have you any share in the move to get me to light Vithalbhai's funeral pyre? You must have read my note. If anybody hopes that I should attend, please discourage him if you can. If they put pressure on me, I shall be able to cope with it, but it will be better if they don't do that. I can take no interest in the outside activities; mentally I am in jail. I will somehow go through the Harijan tour. I hardly even think about other things.

[From Gujarati]

Bapuni Prasadi, p. 139

[1] Addressee's cousin

184. LETTER TO H. K. HALES

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM, WARDHA,
October 31, 1933

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter of the 25th instant. I would be the first person to congratulate anybody who brings concord out of the present discord, and I would wish you all success in your effort.

Undoubtedly the Hindu-Muslim tension is bad. I simply do not know how it can be removed. I am making all individual effort that I am capable of, but that is saying very little.

Of course, my failures do not baffle me. I treat each one of them as a stepping stone to success. But that is different from venturing out without the slightest prospect of success. You may, therefore, depend upon it that, whenever I see the slightest opportunity of pushing through a settlement and of my contributing to it, I would not hesitate to plunge in.

The White Paper, when it first saw the light, did not please me. It does so still less today.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

The Hindu, 26-11-1933

185. LETTER TO ANAND T. HINGORANI

October 31, 1933

MY DEAR ANAND,

I have your letter about Devdas. You have given me a good account. I can see from it how delighted Devdas must have been to receive news from an eye-witness. But I must confine this letter to the bombs which you say have burst upon you.

You must not exaggerate things that come from Father. You have to be prepared for these things, and if you will but keep calm and yet firm, all the clouds will vanish. You should talk gently but firmly to both the parents and tell them that you must be allowed to regulate your future. They have given you a liberal education. They may not now quarrel with the fruits

thereof. Having made your position absolutely clear in as humble a manner as possible, you should take your own line of action. You may avoid arrest in Karachi. After all, Hyderabad is your scene of action, and there you will act in consultation with friends. One thing you should avoid as a good satyagrahi. You may not consult your convenience or predilections in choosing the scene of action. You should, therefore, dismiss the idea of courting arrest somewhere near Wardha. You may not do it outside Sind. It would be inconsistent with the spirit of satyagraha.

I have discussed the whole situation with Vidya, and I think she agrees with me. I did not have to reason with her, but she volunteered the statement that when she resigned herself to your seeking imprisonment and her remaining in Wardha, she concurrently resigned herself not to see you during your incarceration. It would be enough, she said, if you are permitted to write to her as, of course, you would be, and I think that is the correct position even though you may not seek arrest in Karachi. Vidya is really getting on excellently. She does not look moody; she is not morbid and is feeling more and more cheerful. And I expect you too to be cheerful and to write cheerful letters to her.

Love.

BAPU

From a microfilm. Courtesy: National Archives of India and Anand T. Hingorani

186. *LETTER TO CHHAGANLAL JOSHI*

October 31, 1933

CHI. CHHAGANLAL,

Rama and Vimala[1] arrived yesterday. Since you have seen them only recently, I do not write anything about them. I understand from Rama that you get the letters written to you and that you are eagerly expecting a letter from me. You are certainly entitled to expect one. But I did not write any, thinking that, when Rama herself could write very few letters, it would not be proper on my part to claim a share in the number of letters which you are permitted to receive. However, as Damayanti asked even trees for news of Nala, I used to inquire about you from anybody and everybody whom I met and managed to get some news.

[1] Addressee's daughter

You must, of course, make a return for having stayed with me for such a long time, and you have done so handsomely enough. Mahadev also has done that and is still doing it. But, as the sun always carries its shadow as it moves, so also is the shadow always followed by light. Similarly, Mahadev finds peace of mind through something or the other. That seems to be true about you also. You get the company of good books, and now you have been permitted to get butter from outside. What more could you want to keep you happy? You have imbibed over the last many years the teaching of the *Gita* that one should remain cheerful in all circumstances. If, when the time to put that teaching into practice comes, we fail to do so, surely we would feel ashamed of ourselves. I, therefore, don't worry about you, confident that you will certainly not fail in the test. I even hope that you will pass with first-class marks.

Kaka has undertaken a fast. His vow was for a seven-day fast. It will end on the day after tomorrow, that is, on Thursday. The fast is for the sake of . . .[1]. He is extremely cheerful. The fast seems to have had no adverse effect on him. Of course, there is bound to be some weakness. He sleeps in the open air. He gets good sleep. He can drink plenty of water. In that respect, he can do much better than I. Darbari, who regards himself as Kaka's disciple, and Surendra attend on him. You can, therefore, easily understand that he is being looked after very well. Prabhudas works as his secretary. He takes down a few letters which Kaka may wish to dictate, and reads to him from the *Gita*, the Upanishads, etc. Swami also is here at present. Kishorelal and Gomati arrived today. The weather here is bound to be beautiful at this time of the year. The Wardha Ashram has become a girls' Ashram. There are more than 40 girls staying here just now. Lakshmibehn has been working extremely hard, and Dwarakanath helps her. Recently, we have engaged a musician, but the prayers are conducted by Lakshmibehn herself. I knew that she possessed a sweet voice, but I did not know that she knew nearly a hundred *bhajans*. Two prayers, the evening prayers on Thursday and Friday, are conducted by Mathuri[2], and Yoga[3] joins her in singing the *ghazal* on Thursday.

We celebrated Prabhudas's marriage a few days ago. The bride belongs to North India. Her name is Amba. She is in her 25th year. The choice was Prabhudas's own, and the discovery

[1] The name has been omitted.

[2] Lakshmibehn Khare's daughter

[3] Narayan M. Khare's brother's daughter

also was his. Amba's simplicity surpasses Prabhudas's. She has plenty of courage, too. Prabhudas is very happy. The two will stay here at least as long as I am here. My tour begins on the 8th. Nobody, neither Kashi[1] nor Chhaganlal[2] nor any other relative or friend from outside, was invited for the marriage. The bride also was accompanied by only six persons. One can, therefore, say that this was the simplest wedding we have celebrated. The marriage ceremony was performed by a priest from Wardha under the guidance of Kaka.

Among the girls whom you know, Chandrakanta[3] also is here, and so is Vidya Hingorani. She will stay here at least for a year. Vinoba, as you know, stays in a village (of Harijans) about a mile from here. But the moral responsibility for this girls' Ashram is his. Anandi, Babu and Bachu had come here with me, but they have returned now. You will be surprised to know that the girls do not like to go to Sharda Mandir for education. They want arrangements to be made at home. I am in search of suitable persons. I don't think there will be any difficulty. Besides them, there are Vanamala, Mohan, Mani and Bablo. All of them live in the Harijan Children's Ashram run by Anasuyabehn. They went to it quite willingly. Of course they find it a little difficult to get used to the food, etc. The food for Harijan girls is bound to be quite simple, and they get very little milk and ghee, too. If we insist on bringing up our children on food like theirs, they would soon grow thin. I am, therefore, thinking what arrangement to make so that the children, even while they stay in that Ashram, may get proper food. In the mean time, they somehow manage to get the food which they require. Amina's children also are staying in this same Ashram. Unlike our children, they feel perfectly at home there. They play and enjoy themselves the whole day. A munshi has been engaged to teach them the Koran and Urdu.

You must have heard that finally the [Sabarmati] Ashram was given over for Harijan work. It has been decided to send Totaramji to the Ashram. Hariprasad also will go there. Both of them are here at present. Pannalal[4] intends to start an independent dairy. I have written to him to come here. At present he is with Nanibehn[5] and Gangabehn[6] in Ahmedabad. Our dairy is

[1] & [2] Prabhudas Gandhi's parents
[3] Sister of Sumangal Prakash
[4] Pannalal Jhaveri
[5] Pannalal's Wife
[6] Pannalal's step-mother

being run by Titus near the Kankaria lake under the supervision of Shankerlal[1]. I think it is running very well. We have no responsibility even for that.

I suppose you know that the Ashram and the Vidyapith libraries have been handed over to the Ahmedabad Municipality. Raojibhai[2] and Mohanlal Bhatt[3] are expected here in a day or two. Ba is preparing to reach the Mandir. Manu is here. Dhiru, Balabhadra and Indu may be said to have decided to stay on in Bhavnagar. Dudhibehn also has been living there with her children. Nila Nagini's Sirius is in Sharda Mandir. I am sure you recognize this handwriting.[4] I think I have now given you plenty of news. I can give still more, but I have no time. Swami, therefore, will give the rest.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 5513

187. TELEGRAM TO ANAND T. HINGORANI

WARDHA,
November 1, 1933

ANAND HINGORANI
SAHITIPUR
BUNDER ROAD
KARACHI

YOUR LETTER. SHOULD TAKE ACTION HYDERABAD. UNNECESSARY OUTSIDE SIND.[5]

BAPU

From a microfilm. Courtesy: National Archives of India and Anand T. Hingorani

[1] Shankerlal Banker

[2] Raojibhai Nathabhai Patel who had been the head of the Khadi department at the Sabarmati Ashram

[3] Manager of Navajivan Press

[4] Apparently Gandhiji dictated this to Swami Anand.

[5] *Vide* "Letter to Anand T. Hingorani", pp. 162-3.

188. *LETTER TO JAWAHARLAL NEHRU*

Unrevised *November 1, 1933*

MY DEAR JAWAHARLAL,

Your several letters to hand. I see you have handed to the Press the two resignations[1]. They should clear the air a bit.

I do not follow the Hindu Sabha activities. They are vicious. It is most unscrupulous if they are making use of my name in connection with *shuddhi*[2]. If you have any literature please pass it on to me. I think that the nationalist Press so called or real has not welcomed its activities and has been known often to condemn it. I do not know anything about the embargo on M. A. K. Azad's book. As to the Harijan activities, the complaint is wholly unjustified. My conscience is absolutely clear. So far as you and I are concerned, we can clear our minds and hands by exchanging letters, if you like. I do not know what aggressive action is possible or desirable beyond an emphatic condemnation of specific acts.

As to Gorakhpur, I do not see what can be done. I am finding it hard to get funds for your workers and the Dal people. I am still talking about both. Baba Raghavdas told me he was trying grain collections for the peasants in distress. He is under promise to send me authentic details of persecution.

Nariman[3] was here yesterday. I have advised him to see you and told him that you were my political chief! What else could I do? I stand thoroughly discredited as a religious maniac and predominantly a social worker. I told him that if I felt convinced that the A.I.C.C. members desired discontinuance of C. D. and a council-entry programme, I would at once ask you to convene a meeting of A.I.C.C. I do not do so because I believe that the majority will insist on a C. D. programme and I do not want to invite the ordinance sword for it. I have told him too that I would not resist any programme that the A.I.C.C. might want though I could not give my approval to the suspension

[1] Of Jamnalal Bajaj and Dr. Sheikh Mohammad Alam

[2] Literally, 'purificatory rite'. Here reconversion to Hinduism.

[3] K. F. Nariman

of C. D. I believe Kelkar's[1] attitude to be honest and consistent. He frankly dislikes N. C. O. and C. D. He would not join the terrorists or whatever they may be called. Then for a man of political activity, council-entry is the only programme such as it is. Hopeless inactivity is the worst of all and should be discountenanced.

I think I have now covered all the points raised in your letters and even not raised. It is nearing 4 a.m.

Hope Mother's progress continuing. Herewith note[2] for Kamala.

Love.

BAPU

Gandhi-Nehru Papers, 1933. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

189. LETTER TO VALLABHBHAI PATEL

November 1, 1933

BHAI VALLABHBHAI,

There is a saying in English that great men think alike, and, since both of us are great, we thought alike regarding the cremation rites for Vithalbhai.[3] I have written to Dahyabhai. I am not likely to publish anything as being your view. With regard to the wires and cables which you have received, after informing the Major[4] write one sentence in your next letter to me to the following effect: "On my behalf please thank through the Press all those who have sent letters and wires or cables of condolence." If the Major cannot pass that on his own, he should write to the I. G. and, if he passes it, we shall publish it . . ..[5]

Nariman was here yesterday. He took a fairly long time with me and I readily gave it. My warden[6] let me do that. Just now, however, we may pound any amount of paddy we like but we shall get nothing but chaff.

[1] N. C. Kelkar

[2] This is not available.

[3] In his letter dated October 29, 1933 the addressee had said that he had informed friends that it would be improper for him as a satyagrahi to request Government to release him for performing the cremation rites.

[4] Superintendent of the Nasik Jail

[5] Omission as in the source

[6] Jamnalal Bajaj

Deenabandhu is arriving here today. He is returning after an extensive tour, and so I expect that he will want much time with me and I shall have to give it.

Kaka's fast will end tomorrow. He is cheerful. He doesn't seem to have been visibly affected by the fast. He doesn't feel a burning sensation [in passing urine] as I do. He can drink plenty of water, no matter whether it is mixed with salt or soda or is hot or cold. If God would grant me the same ability, I should even at this age like to improve upon Bhansali's[1] performance. I wouldn't mind if, in consequence, I became crazy like him. He wears a codpiece of hessian suspended from a string of coir tied round his waist. He eats moistened flour and wanders about. He reappears sometimes in the form of a postcard and tells me in it that he is getting real spiritual experience only now.

During the fast, [Kaka] also did some writing through dictation. Prabhudas has become his honorary secretary and also recites from the *Gita* for him. Since Prabhudas has been Kaka's favourite disciple, the arrangement suits the latter very well. Kishorelal and Gomati also arrived yesterday. I was the cause of their coming.

. . .[2]

Kaka has done his duty as friend and father to the best of his ability. . . .[3] continues to follow his own ways in his inordinate pride. But I have not given up hope of him. I do believe, though, that his eyes will not open till he stumbles some day. What you say is quite right. A coward's wisdom won't carry him far. On the contrary, if an insolent boy like . . .[4] who is always flying in the air, became wise, his wisdom would never desert him afterwards and would help him fearlessly to mount the gallows. But that seems too good to come true. I think Kaka will soon regain his strength. Don't worry about him. During the fast, I didn't let my knowledge as a quack rust, so that, over and above the spiritual benefit from the fast, his body has certainly benefited. You did well in administering a powerful dose of medicine[5] to . . .[6] and Pandya[7]. But the effect of such medicines does not last long and their reactions are sometimes dangerous. I am not saying this to criticize your medicine. My only purpose is

[1] Jaikrishnadas Prabhudas Bhansali, noted for his long fasts

[2] Omission as in the source

[3], [4] & [6] The names are omitted in the source.

[5] The addressee, in his letter, had called the dose *hiranyagarbha matra* and meant 'suggestion to court imprisonment forthwith'.

[7] Mohanlal Kameshvar Pandya, a worker of Kaira District

to draw your attention to the truth. Mahadev writes to me regularly. He has been collecting books from all sources. I suppose one day all those books will go to a public library. I hope he doesn't go blind in jail through excessive reading. I do intend to send him a mildly-worded prohibitory order. Dr. Datta visited Devdas [in jail]. The latter seems to be making good use of his time. He reads, teaches, plays games and spins. My programme is as follows: Up to the end of this month, the C.P., then Delhi, then the Punjab, then Sind, then Rajputana, then the U.P., Bengal, Assam, etc. This is the plan at present. But it is not impossible that there may be some change in this programme and I may go to Madras earlier. I shall be leaving this place on the 8th. I shall have to come back later for two or three days for a tour of the Wardha taluka. I will write to Deodhar regarding your letter. Rajendrababu has again been removed to a hospital. I think he will now be kept there for some time.

Blessings from
BAPU

[From Gujarati]
Bapuna Patro–2: Sardar Vallabhbhaine, pp. 39-43

190. LETTER TO MATHURADAS TRIKUMJI

November 1, 1933

My desire to give up the role of leadership has not weakened in the least. On the contrary, it is becoming more intense. But I cannot give it up even if I wish, for I did not seek it.

[From Gujarati]
Bapuni Prasadi, p. 140

191. LETTER TO GOVERNOR OF BENGAL

WARDHA,
November 2, 1933

H.E. THE GOVERNOR OF BENGAL
CALCUTTA

DEAR FRIEND,

Though I have not the honour to enjoy personal acquaintance with you, I had the good fortune to know you through Sir Samuel Hoare when I was in London in 1931. On the strength

of that introduction, I venture to share the enclosed[1] with you. It is a letter from an esteemed worker. It speaks for itself. I have the hope that proceedings described therein could not possibly meet with your approval. The civil resister of whom mention is made in the letter is the writer's brother. No doubt a civil resister is out for suffering, but I should think that, according to the standard apparently accepted today, all methods of torture would be avoided by Governments claiming to be civilized.

I shall feel thankful to know that you have personally interested yourself in the case I have ventured to bring to your notice.

I am,
Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

Gandhi-Nehru Papers, 1933. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

192. INTERVIEW WITH DR. CONGER[2]

November 2, 1933

DR. CONGER: Is the hand of God behind good only, or is it behind evil also?

GANDHIJI: It is behind good, but in God's hand it is not mere good. His hand is behind evil also, but there it is no longer evil. "Good" and "evil" are our own imperfect language. God is above both good and evil.

Q. There is God's will behind every one of our actions, is it not?

A. Even allowing that there is His will behind every action, man can say that certain things God allows, wills or prohibits. All this is taken to mean His "will".

Q. You said there was God's inspiration behind your twenty-one days' fast. You have also spoken of "wrestling". What exactly do you mean to convey?

[1] In his letters dated October 27 and 28 Satis Chandra Das Gupta had described the inhuman treatment meted out to his brother Kshitish Chandra Das Gupta and other persons in Hijli Jail for their refusal to salaam the jail authorities.

[2] This is reported by Chandrashankar Shukla who was at the time working as Secretary to Gandhiji and had kept notes of the interview which was later reproduced in his book *Conversations with Mahatma Gandhi*.

A. These are the babblings of an imperfect man. Man's wrestling with God is like that of an infant's wrestling with the mother. The infant does wrestle with the mother; and when the mother gives it a feed the infant says: "I wrested it from her."

Here Gandhiji gave the dictionary meanings of the words "wrestle" and "wrest".

Similarly God, when He parts with something, does so with pleasure, if God has pleasure and pain. A man who surrenders everything at His feet says to Him: "I will die, if you don't give me a certain thing." He defies and challenges God. In millions of examples God lets such men reach the point of death. Then we say that He has thoroughly tested the man. That, however, is our own feeling. If man can somehow know God's way of putting things, I don't know what He would say. We foolish beings think that we have exhausted our strength in wrestling with Him. With God there is neither wrestling nor wresting. If God is just, He would not torture His devotee.

Q. Is God just or not?

A. God is just. Rather, He is not just but merciful. He is just because He is merciful. These, however, are echoes of our own weak feeling. Man also sometimes talks of giving God His due. But what can a slave give to the Master? In relation to God man is always a debtor, and never a creditor.

Q. Is faith necessary or effort?

A. Really both faith and effort are necessary.

Q. Has man got a choice?

A. Man has got a choice, but as much of it as a passenger on board a ship has. It is just enough for him. If we don't use it, then we are practically dead.

Q. God has a purpose which He is working out in the world, is it not?

A. I qualify the statement by saying that this is human speech. I don't know God's purpose, because I am not God. I am a man. I therefore try to comprehend God and His purpose not through speech but through life. I cannot deal with the hundreds of thousands of beings in the universe as a unit. I cannot enter into the heart of every one of them, because they are infinite in number. But God is all-powerful. Just as He has a purpose for the universe as a unit, He has a purpose for every particle of life too—for man as well as the ant.

Q. Is it a good purpose?

A. It is a good purpose—but "good" in the way of our limited human speech.

The Sino-Indian Journal, Gandhi Memorial Number, December 1948

193. NOTES

Distress in Rohtak, Punjab[1]

This is a tale of distress that ought to move philathropists to action. Any contributions sent to the Editor, *Harijan*, 8-c, Pycroft's Road, Triplicane, Madras, will be acknowledged and forwarded the proper quarters.

The Forthcoming Tour

"How would the collections, made during the forthcoming tour, be distributed?" is the question put by several workers. They will be handed to the Central Board with instructions to use them as far as may be for the province or the district or the taluk or the town, in which they may be collected. Whilst this will be the general rule, I do contemplate receiving in some places large single donations which will be utilized for the Harijan cause wherever the need is the greatest. It must be obvious that any rigid rule restricting the use of collections to the places where they are collected will defeat the very end for which the collections are to be made. No doubt in every place the local workers will give me the benefit of their suggestions as to the use to be made of the collections.

Let there be no hesitation on the part of workers or donors for fear of the collections not being used in their districts or in the best manner possible. They should realize that the Central Board has an efficient system of account keeping, that accounts are audited and, I believe, published regularly.

His Love for Harijans[2]

In the hasty tribute[3] I paid to the memory of Vithalbhai Patel, I omitted to mention the unforgettable scene I witnessed at

[1] This was appended to Amritlal V. Thakkar's appeal for contributions to the fund started by the Harijan Sevak Sangh for rehabilitating Harijans of Rohtak District where 21,000 houses were destroyed due to heavy rains in September 1933; *vide* also p. 81.

[2] A similar article in Gujarati appeared in *Harijanbandhu*, 5-11-1933.

[3] *Vide* p. 137.

the Harijan quarters in Godhra, which place I visited in 1917[1] for its political conference. There was a Harijan conference, too, held at the time, and I had invited the audience to come to the Harijan quarters and hold the conference there, if they were sincere in their professions.[2] Whom should I see there if not Vithalbhai Patel, who was then a member of the Legislative Council, dressed in the peasant garb with a Sadhu's topi on his head?[3] He mixed with the Harijans with the greatest freedom and I know that he evinced the greatest interest in the Harijan cause. With him the sweeper was as good as any other person, no matter what his caste might be. He never concealed his opinion or practice in order to please the orthodox. Let me hope that on the 9th instant, when the last rites are performed, Harijan tears will freely mingle with those of the multitude who will pay homage to the memory of the deceased patriot.

Harijan, 3-11-1933

194. THE CRY OF ORISSA

> In the morning of the 17th inst. (October), we went to Khandayta. Here the rushing waters had broken through the banks and for miles and miles a new river had come into being, destroying many a home. Very few houses appeared to be standing. The Marwadi Society has carried on operations here. It has been feeding 3,500 persons from 25 villages and doling out 7 seers ($1\frac{1}{2}$ seers of Cuttack is equal to 4 lb.) of rice per month per head and one cotton sheet, and husk for cattle. Thus the Society has distributed Rs. 5,000 among these. At another centre, the Society has been giving relief to 5,700 people from 27 villages; each person gets here 26 tolas of rice. There is a big rush even for this little dole. There are two central depots in Cuttack and two in

[1] The source has 1916. Gandhiji had visited Godhra in November 1917; *vide* Vol. XIV, pp. 48-73.

[2] The Gujarati version here has the following additional sentences: "And for the first time in the history of Godhra, the Harijan colony was crowded with caste Hindus. The place overflowed with people. Abbas Saheb and his wife were no doubt there."

[3] The Gujarati version here adds: "As I had never seen Vithalbhai in this dress, I could not recognize him immediately. But when I did, we heartily embraced each other and had a hearty laugh. No doubt Vithalbhai had deliberately donned this dress but it also shows his simplicity and readiness to mix with people."

Puri. Nearly Rs. 15,000 have been spent there. From Khandayta we went to Khadarda. Half the number of houses belonging to Harijans have been razed to the ground. Those that remained have become dilapidated. There we saw a woman only half clad and in perfect destitution. She complained of want of work. In a house nearby, we saw a sister lying on the damp floor and suffering from high fever. These people will need clothes against the approaching cold weather. From Khadarda we went to Jharpada. There we saw eight volunteers working under most difficult circumstances. They distributed medical relief among ailing people and they had rigged up a kind of accommodation for admitting very bad cases. You can imagine what sort of nursing these poor patients can get. Here 4 lb. of rice (costing six pice) per week are issued to adults. Half the rations are doled out to minors. Those who are able-bodied get nothing. Therefore relief is confined principally to women and children. I cannot imagine at the present moment a better use for the money of those who are charitably inclined. You should not imagine that anything like adequate relief is being given. More depots could be opened if there was more money. It is possible to make the best use of 40 to 50 thousand rupees per month, for, even at the rate of 8 as. per month, out of half a lakh of rupees only one lakh persons can be reached, and the number affected is surely larger.

I have translated certain extracts from letters received from Sjt. Harak[h]chand Motichand, who has been specially sent to Orissa in order to help the local Flood Relief Committee, of which Deenabandhu Andrews has accepted theCh airmanship. Thakkar Bapa rebukes me, and he has every right to do so, by saying:

Thakkar Bapa has to be pardoned for forgetting that notice of the marriage was necessary in the interest of the Harijan cause.

> How can you close the columns of the *Harijan* to the distress of the people who are sorely affected by the flood? They are no better off than Harijans. And if you will plead only for those who are labelled as 'Harijan', even so there are thousands of these labelled ones also. Surely, if you can give some space to a description of the Devdas-Lakshmi marriage, you ought to take notice of the distress amongst the flood-stricken people of Orissa. You have already issued a moving appeal for Orissa. To open the columns of the *Harijan* to periodical descriptions of the effects of the Orissa floods is but a logical extension of what you have done.

But love is blind. And he is a lover of humanity in distress, no matter in what quarter of the globe that humanity is to be found. His love is limited only by the limits that God Almighty has prescribed. Therefore, he exclaims: "See what my workers got the other day for my Bhils in the Panch Mahals. Why can't *you* get much more for the more numerous population of a whole province?" He is right. And in all humanity I make this appeal to whomsoever may see it. There is no doubt about the distress. I have always held that Orissa is the most helpless and the poorest province of India. Thousands of pilgrims visit the ancient temple of Puri for acquiring merit. Hundreds among them are rich enough to satisfy the hunger of the hungry and clothe the naked. Times are no doubt bad. That is just the opportunity for the moneyed people to deny themselves many things they have hitherto held necessary for their comfort or enjoyment and establish their right to the wealth God has blessed them with, by unstintingly helping the helpless.

Somehow or other, ever since my return to India in 1915, Orissa has been to me an epitome of India's distressful helplessness. The Bombay Committee is there, but I must tell the citizens that their response is very poor. At the time of writing I find that only Rs. 12,000 have been subscribed by Bombay. I cannot recall an instance when Bombay had pleaded bad times in the face of hunger and nakedness. Bombay has felt uneasy in its cinemas and theatres, with the cry for help ringing in the ears of her citizens. Let them not do less now than they have done before. And why should not the wealthy people of the other parts of India wake up and vie with Bombay in catholic charity? Any money sent to the Editor, *Harijan*, at 8-C, Pycroft's Road, Triplicane, Madras, will be acknowledged in these columns and forwarded to the proper quarters.

Harijan, 3-11-1933

195. TWO CRUEL CASES

The record of steady progress reported from week to week in these pages is perhaps more than balanced by the revelations of inhumanity towards Harijans that come to light from time to time. At a village called Samarkha in the district of Kheda, Gujarat, the caste villagers are reported to have burnt the crops of Christian Harijans because one or more of them had had the courage to draw water from a public well. The case is now said to be pending before the Courts.

In the village of Dholka, in Ahmedabad District, caste men are reported to have horsewhipped some Harijans, two of them seriously because one of them had the temerity to bathe in a public tank.

These are not the only cases of their kind. They are serious enough to have seen the light of day. We have no knowledge of the many petty assaults committed upon innocent Harijans for the exercise of human rights recognized by law.

These cases should open the eyes of sanatanists. I have not known a single sanatanist defend such inhumanity. Let them either co-operate with the reformers or act separately, but effectively, in preventing or dealing with such occurrences.

The duty before workers is clear. They may not hesitate to take such cases to court, when it becomes necessary. But, before so doing, they should make every attempt to bring the wrongdoers to a sense of the wrong done and to induce them to make adequate reparation. I imagine that this can be done, if, for instance in the case of Samarkha, well-known men and women from Nadiad or even Ahmedabad, if necessary, went to the village and reasoned with the wrongdoers who have inherited the habit of thinking that caste Hindus may deal with Harijans as if they were mere chattels and not human beings. This dark ignorance of the elementary rights of human beings can be dispelled by the light of public opinion playing upon the darkness. I hope no Hindu thinks that he need not concern himself in the case of Christian Harijans. These have surely the same rights with Hindu Harijans to public activities that caste men have. If the latter do not want to make use of public institutions, it is open to them at their own expense to erect others, for their exclusive

use. Sects and communities do build separate schools and hospitals for themselves out of funds they themselves subscribe. No one takes exception to these. But no one has the right to prevent anyone else from using what belongs to the general public. And then, it should be remembered that Christian Harijans are our own creation. The evil of untouchability has spread in quarters wholly unexpected. We may not wince if now we have to pay the penalty for having harboured the evil for untold generations.

Harijan, 3-11-1933

196. NO NEED FOR A TANNERY?

A correspondent has raised the following question:

> I can understand the removal of the offices of the Provincial or Central Board of the Servants of Untouchables Society to the Ashram donated for Harijan use. I can also understand the hostel scheme and the one for establishing a Harijan colony. But a tannery does not fit in, and if a tannery should be there, why not also a department for teaching scavenging and sanitation; for, it is as much a Harijan work as tanning?

The fallacy of the argument lies in misunderstanding the purpose of the proposed tannery. It is that tanning should be a great national industry. The leather constitutes an immense business, and instead of exporting raw hide, we should keep it in India and manufacture the various things we need. It must mean a great addition to the wealth of the country. Now tens of thousands of Harijans are engaged in tanning. It is an honourable profession and a lucrative business, and can be much more lucrative if it is well organized. But the tanning done in the villages is of the crudest type. Moreover, all the processes are not performed in a hygienic or scientific manner. If they were performed in a scientific manner, there would be no prejudices against cattle skinning and tanning as they exist today. The idea, therefore, behind having a technological department at the new institution is to give dignity to the occupation, purging it of all crudeness and uncleanness. Then, again, it is not as if only Harijans will be doing the work. They will be doing it side by side with non-Harijans. No one will be forced to learn it and no one can dare suggest that no Harijan tanner would want to learn the scientific or the cleaner method. Lastly, the reference to the technological department is merely by

way of illustration. If all goes well, there will be many other departments opened including even one for exploring the best method of rendering sanitary service in which all can take part. Our indifference towards it has resulted in the increase of diseases and in insanitary habits becoming confirmed. I am hoping that there will be no trade or profession neglected which can be of benefit to the Harijans, whether it has been hitherto followed by them or not.

Harijan, 3-11-1933

197. LETTER TO AGATHA HARRISON

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM, WARDHA,
November 3, 1933

MY DEAR AGATHA,

I enclose herewith a copy of my letter[1] to the Governor of Bengal. Sjt. Satis Chandra Das Gupta, the author of the enclosures to the Governor's letter, is a valued and well-known coworker. His non-violence is deep-rooted, not at all superficial, and he is one of the truest of men it has been my good fortune to meet. He first came to know of the Hijli Jail practice when he understood that his brother who is a civil resister was given standing hand-cuffs. Bar fetters are different from hand-cuffs. Bar fetters are meant for the legs.

At the present moment I am not resorting to any public agitation in connection with the things that come under my observation. I pass them on to the authorities. Therefore, unless I tell you to the contrary, all such correspondence should not be published at your end either. Apart from this, there is no restriction upon the use to be made by you of such information.

I send you also a copy of a note received from the Frontier Province. That discloses a tale far worse than the treatment in the Hijli Jail as disclosed in Sjt. Satisbabu's letter to me. Naturally, nobody can vouch for the accuracy of the information from the Frontier Province. But, after the revelations made by Father Elwin, it would not surprise me if the note is found to be an under-statement. The note has just come to me, and I have not yet decided what use I should make of it here.

C. F. Andrews is here.

BAPU

From a photostat: G.N. 1473

[1] *Vide* pp. 170-1.

198. LETTER TO JAWAHARLAL NEHRU

November 3, 1933

MY DEAR JAWAHARLAL,

My own opinion is that the atrocities such as are referred to in the Frontier Province note should first be dealt with privately, and all the means that we can employ to induce the authorities to adopt less cruel measures should be employed. I am asking Andrews to deal with the Frontier Province note. And if you have no objection I would like you to show the note to Sir Tej Bahadur and see what he has got to say and if he is at all inclined to move.

I enclose herewith a copy of my letter to the Governor of Bengal about what is going on in Hijli.

Love.

BAPU

Gandhi-Nehru Papers, 1933. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

199. LETTER TO PRABHASHANKAR PATTANI

WARDHA,
November 4, 1933

SUJNA BHAISHRI,

Deenabandhu Andrews is here. He will leave today and sail for England on the 11th. You had promised him, while in England, to give or get Rs. 5,000 for Santiniketan. Andrews, of course, didn't like to remind you. If you can send the money, please do so. Gurudev is always in need of money, and so, if he has made any plans on the basis of the sum promised by you, they would have to be abandoned and he would be worried. I hope you keep excellent health. Andrews showed me your letter. Please don't worry about me. If God wants me to complete the tour, He will preserve my good health. Where shall I find a better watchman or doctor than He?

Vandemataram from
MOHANDAS

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 5930. Also C.W. 3246. Courtesy: Mahesh P. Pattani

200. LETTER TO MANIBEHN PATEL

November 4, 1933

CHI. MANI,

I got your letter. Dahyabhai is putting up a good fight[1]. Let him fight wherever he sees unworthy motives and insincerity. I hope you are getting proper treatment. Do write to me regularly. I was very glad that Babo came here. Ba will [court arrest] after I go. Anyway we must keep ourselves ready for that.

Blessings from
BAPU

[From Gujarati]
Bapuna Patro–4: Manibehn Patelne, p. 110

201. ANSWERS TO CORRESPONDENTS[2]

[Before *November 5, 1933*]

WHAT IS THE LEAST WE CAN DO?[3]

One can have attachment even for service. True service can be rendered only by giving up all attachments. Cannot the weak and the infirm worship God? One can serve even mentally. You can take a couple of Harijan girls into your household and bring them up.

INSTRUCTIONS TO A YOUNG MAN[4]

Live on milk, chapati and boiled greens. Give up chillies and spices. Take moderate exercise in the open. Engage yourself in nation-building activities and go on repeating Ramanama. If you do this, you may be able to overcome wet dreams.

[1] According to the addressee it was in connection with the arrangements etc., for cremation rites of Vithalbhai Patel.
[2] This appeared under the title "From the Mail-bag".
[3] This was addressed to a woman in poor health who felt unhappy because she wished to but could not serve Harijans.
[4] Who had asked for a remedy for nocturnal discharge

How to Cure This Disease?

I am sure your disease can be cured. You must give up rich food and medicines. If you spend your time outside the house in the open, live on fresh milk, fresh fruit, greens and chapatis, take moderate exercise within the limits of your strength, avoid reading exciting literature and do not go to films and plays, you can be cured of your disease.

How to Concentrate?

The best way of acquiring concentration is to be absorbed in whatever physical work you may be engaged in. And one is bound to get absorbed in it if one tries to do it to the best of one's ability.

Among the names of God, that one will be most useful to us to which we are accustomed. I myself love Ramanama.

What Is Inner Voice?[1]

What you say is logically correct. But if one does not have a clear idea as to what the inner voice means, the principle cannot be followed in practice. I believe that the inner voice is perfect knowledge or realization of the Truth. And because we do not see perfect Truth, because the truth that we see is imperfect, we look upon the seers of the world as our guides and follow them. Definite rules have been laid down to help us realize truth, and we can know Truth only by following them. Hence, just as we cannot know geometry without studying it, so also it is not possible for anybody to hear the inner voice without the necessary effort and training. Hence, according to my definition, a murderer cannot cite the inner voice in defence of his act.

Limitations of a Fast[2]

I am firmly of the view that no one should resort to a fast for personal benefit. If everyone started fasting against others for redress of his or her grievances, there would be chaos in public life. This friend, therefore, should be persuaded to give up his fast.

[1] This was in reply to a correspondent who had asked whether everybody would not follow Gandhiji's example and claim "inner voice" in justification of all his actions, good or bad.

[2] This was addressed to a man whose friend had lost his job and had gone on a fast to get it back.

THINK OF THE MILLIONS[1]

A person who follows the path of dharma does not feel helpless. One should not incur debt and spend money on medicines. If you compare yourself with the vast millions, you will see that your financial condition is a thousand times better than theirs. If you cultivate strength to endure your financial hardships, all your sufferings will change into happiness. Of the eight persons, whoever can do physical labour should do it.

[From Gujarati]

Harijanbandhu, 5-11-1933

202. A WORKER'S PROBLEM

A worker serving the Harijans has sent a double-stringed necklace made of gold, *rudraksha* and coral along with Rs. 13-8-0 which he had received on the occasion of his maternal uncle's *shraddha*. In an accompanying note the gentleman says.[2]

The short and the straight reply to this is that one should not in the first place act against one's principles in order to please anybody. Once it becomes clear to us that what we are being persuaded to do is against our principles, there should be no question of giving in to anyone's importunity.

But I know this reply will not satisfy my correspondent. There is only one root cause of all human failings and that is our lack of faith in God. Chanting His name or visiting temples, etc., as a matter of convention is no sign of our faith in God, but rather a symptom of lethargy or mental weakness. Faith in God ought to be a matter of the heart. And one who has it should find no need to satisfy another. He who has satisfied God has triumphed; and, he who has not known Him may please thousands, but is lost for ever inasmuch as he has to deny himself in trying to please one person after another. God is the soul within, because He pervades every single atom. And this is not only a belief but an established fact. Some know Him as Nature rather than by the name of God. Some know Him as the great Power. Even modern scientists concede that there is a power hidden in each

[1] This was addressed to a correspondent whose financial condition was bad and who had asked for advice.

[2] The letter is not translated here. The correspondent had asked how one could get over the weakness which obliged one to act contrary to one's principles in order to please others.

atom which sustains the universe. Anyone who acts in subservience to this great Power will never be wanting in strength. His will-power will grow day after day. It is well known that those experienced in the ways of the world have shown the means by which this force can be demonstrated. This power cannot but become manifest in anyone who adopts them. As the *Harijanbandhu* has already referred to them[1], they need not be repeated here.

[From Gujarati]

Harijanbandhu, 5-11-1933

203. *KUTCH HARIJAN WORKER BELABOURED*

Bhai Gokuldas Khimji of Mandvi, Kutch, is a well-known social and Harijan worker. Writing about him a gentleman says that when I had gone to Kutch I had compared him to the docile cow. I remember that occasion. Gokuldas is indeed humble. He serves wherever he can. He just would not hurt anyone. He has written to Bhai Parikshitlal, Secretary, Gujarat Anti-untouchability League, as follows:[2]

In this case, victory lies with the person who has been beaten up and not with those who beat him up. The beating up of such humble workers as Gokuldas will generate a spiritual energy which will melt the core of caste Hindus and release the Harijans from bondage. The saner sanatanist Hindus of Kutch ought to make efforts to stop such rowdyism. Even if untouchability were dharma, it can be protected by spiritual strength. I do not know if it was ever safeguarded by brute force.

[From Gujarati]

Harijanbandhu, 5-11-1933

[1] *Vide* "Some Moral Posers", pp. 127-9.

[2] The letter is not translated here. He had insisted on taking Harijan children along a certain road. The Rajputs objected to this and beat him up.

204. LETTER TO TOTARAM HINGORANI

WARDHA,
November 5, 1933

MY DEAR FRIEND,

I like your letter. It is full of love for Anand and Vidya. No doubt they are both sentimental. But they are both good as gold. You have every reason to be proud of them. I like, too, your idea of finding constructive service for both of them. But in this desire of yours I detect an excess of affection. I plead for restraint. Anand's soul will be injured, if he is made or induced to break the sacred promise made to God. You do not need my assurance that Anand adores both you and your noble wife. He would love to do anything to win your approbation and blessings. It would be wrong to exploit parent-worship for weakening him. Therefore for the time being let him do the things he has promised to God to do. He will be safe. God will take care of him. As for Vidya, she has been smothered by the blind affection of fond mother-in-law. She is doing khadi work here. Believe me she is keeping good health and so is Mahadev. She has very good company and lives her own life. She has English tuition and I want to add Hindi, if she will have it and her health stands it. If God wills, in a year's time she will return to you a daughter more lovable and stronger both in body and mind.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

From a microfilm. Courtesy: National Archives of India and Anand T. Hingorani

205. LETTER TO PREMI JAIRAMDAS

November 5, 1933

MY DEAR PREMI[1],

I was glad to have your letter and the news about Father. Of course I have no home in Hyderabad as dear to me as yours. When I come you will keep me there or wherever on your behalf the Committee keeps me and the large company accompanying me. Is Father allowed to receive many letters? Give him my love and tell him Vidya is flourishing.

Love to you all.

BAPU

SMT. PREMIBEHN
CARE SHRI JAIRAMDAS DOULATRAM
MARKET ROAD, HYDERABAD, SIND

From the original: C.W. 9244. Courtesy: Jairamdas Doulatram

206. LETTER TO J. C. KUMARAPPA

November 5, 1933

MY DEAR KUMARAPPA,

I had your note.

I hope you are now properly housed and that the treatment is doing you good.

Ba and Manu are likely to be in Ahmedabad pretty soon.

My tour commences properly on 8th inst. You shall have the programme. But regard Wardha as my address.

Many of your companions are here just now—Morarji[2], Swami, Gokulbhai, Divanji. They are dispersing as soon as they come.

Love from us all.

BAPU

From a photostat: G.N. 10102

[1] Daughter of Jairamdas Doulatram
[2] Morarji Desai

207. LETTER TO VALLABHBHAI PATEL

[*November 5, 1933*][1]

BHAISHRI VALLABHBHAI,

I got your letter today. I heard about the Vithalbhai Shraddha Committee as much as you did and from the same source. Surely Mani is not your daughter only?

Swami had shown me . . .'s[2] analysis. Otherwise I would have missed reading that literature. Why don't you say plainly that the real difficulty is that you are not with me? I feel that as much as you do. I, therefore, follow the example of Ekalavya. Being turned away by Dronacharya, he kept an image of the latter in front of him and learnt archery. I don't want to be an archer, and you do not know how to shoot arrows. You have broken your bow and made it into a plough. I, too, wish to plough in fields.

I daily make a Partheshwar Chintamani[3] and consult him. But how can one be sure that I always get the correct reply? My point, however, is that I always bear in mind what you would desire.

Ba is getting ready for imprisonment. Charliebhai is leaving on the 11th. He left this place yesterday. He visited all places and met all persons, but to no avail.

The news of Kaka's fast does not seem to have spread. Here also we didn't let it be talked about much. He is regaining strength rapidly.

Ultimately Prabhudas has decided to go to Almora. I want you to write to me even while I am touring. I, too, will write to you.

Kaka, Swami and company will follow Ba (to jail). Morarji and ohers are here. They are all right. Don't worry about them. This time you . . ..[4]

[1] The date has been inferred from the reference to C. F. Andrews's departure from Wardha; *vide* "Letter to Prabhashankar Pattani", p. 180.

[2] The name is omitted in the source.

[3] Gandhiji is apparently referring to the orthodox practice of making a clay *Shivalinga* for worship, which in his case would obviously be the inner voice.

[4] The rest of the sentence was scored out by the iail authorities.

Khurshed is improving.

Blessings to you and Chandulal from
BAPU

[From Gujarati]
Bapuna Patro–2 : Sardar Vallabhbhaine, pp. 43-4

208. LETTER TO MANIBEHN PATEL

November 5, 1933

CHI. MANI,

I have your letter. Dahyabhai is fighting hard to purify the atmosphere. I will not be going there. Continue to write to me in detail. Ba may start from here on the 13th. After completing Nagpur I have to return to Wardha and so she feels tempted to stay on here till then. In Ahmedabad I believe she will stay with Ranchhodbhai[1]. Otherwise the Red Bungalow at any rate is there. It will be for me to decide. Do you have any suggestion to make? Do everything possible about your leg. Do not be in too great a haste.

Blessings from
BAPU

[From Gujarati]
Bapuna Patro–4 : Manibehn Patelne, p. 111

209. LETTER TO NARAYAN M. KHARE

November 5, 1933

CHI. PANDITJI,

I manage to get news about you. I see that you have been spending your time well. Here Lakshmibehn has been doing very useful work. She is looking after most of the things. Though a musician has joined, I have requested her to lead the *bhajans*, etc., during the prayers and she does so. On Thursdays and Fridays, Mathuri sings the *bhajans* in her beautiful voice. I din't know that she could sing with such a full voice. Lakshmibehn is bound to write about the other things, and so I don't mention them here in order to save time. Kaka's seven-day fast ended on Thursday.

[1] Ranchhodbhai Sheth

It was necessary. I assume you have heard everything. Chandrashankar, Mirabehn, Nayar and Jamnalalji's Om will accompany me in my tour. Ramnath 'Suman', a friend of Haribhau's, also will be one of the party. And of course Thakkar Bapa. The tour will last for nine months without a break.

I don't get full reports about what Rambhau[1] does in Ahmedabad. He himself never writes. Probably you get some news. Gajanan[2] and Dhiru are doing fairly well. The former is discontented. He says that he doesn't receive proper education. Yoga[3] seemed to be a fine girl. She is intelligent, too. I didn't know she knew Gujarati so well.

Blessings to all from
BAPU

From a copy of the Gujarati: C.W. 247. Courtesy: Lakshmibehn N. Khare

210. *SPEECH TO HARIJANS*[4]

NALWADI,
[Before *November 7, 1933*][5]

Vinoba has come here to serve you. The Ashram programme is followed here regularly. I hope you will take full advantage of it. Shethji reminded me just now that no one was prepared to remove the carcass of a bullock, and so the Ashram inmates carried it and buried it. The Harijan friends were displeased by this, for they think that others should not do the work allotted to the lowest even among the untouchables. Vinoba has made a thorough study of the scriptures. He says that nowhere has God enjoined that some are high and others low, some touchable and some untouchable. He has been working among Harijans to wipe out these distinctions. Dr. Ambedkar is pained and enraged by the oppression of Harijans by caste Hindus. Why should he not feel angry at the oppression which caste Hindus have perpetrated on Harijans? Why, then, do you make such distinctions of high and low among you? If the position that only the Bhangis may remove night-soil and dead animals is accepted, the work being done among Harijans will stop. Brahmana,

[1] Ramachandra Khare, addressee's son

[2] & [3] Addressee's brother's son and daughter

[4] This has been translated from Chandrashankar Shukla's weekly letter.

[5] This and the following item are from the report date-lined "Wardha, November 7, 1933".

Kshatriya, Vaishya and Shudra were the four varnas and some others were regarded as belonging to the fifth varna, or as falling outside the varna system. These varnas have not retained their original character. What survives is the distinction of high and low. God has not made anybody high or low. If, living here, we serve you as your Bhangis, you should not be angry. How can we serve Harijans? Should we serve the Mahars but not the Bhangis? Should we make distinctions among Harijans? Hinduism will perish unless these distinctions are wiped out. The majority of the population in India consists of Hindus. If they perish, what would India be left with? It would of course be a different matter if all Hindus became Muslims or Christians. If, however, we feel that Hinduism is good, we must save it from destruction. It has produced innumerable saints and sages. The *Gita* is one of the greatest scriptures, if not the greatest of all. A religion which has given such a treatise and which has produced great saints like Jnaneshwar, Tukaram and Samartha Ramdas is certainly not destined to perish. We must realize that it is meant to live for ever, that it is imperishable. We must rid it of any imperfections or evil that may have crept into it. The evil of untouchability that has entered it should be wiped out. Mahar, Mang, Bhangi and similar names came into use to indicate different occupations. But because of that it cannot be said that the Mahars are higher than the Mangs and the Mangs are higher than the Bhangis. Mang, Bhangi, Mahar and other Harijans, all serve society. If they did not do so, society could not survive. The workers who have come here have done so only to serve you, and not for money. They will be happy only if they can add to your income by ever so little. Accept their service and thank God for this kindness.

[From Gujarati]

Harijanbandhu, 12-11-1933

211. ADVICE TO A HARIJAN WORKER[1]

[Before *November 7, 1933*]

From experience I have come to the conclusion that while praying we should not worry about unwanted thoughts and should not feel unhappy if they come. If we try to keep them out, they invade us with greater force. Fear haunts the frightened. The same is true about unwanted thoughts. To keep worrying why we get such thoughts, is like devoting oneself to them through enmity. If we get unwanted thoughts, we should know that enemies have arrived, but we should not invite them. Just as an uninvited guest feels offended and leaves if he is not welcomed, so also unwanted thoughts will go away if we do not bother about them. But at the same time, as we do not neglect the invited guest just because some uninvited guest has intruded, so also we should not, just because of the invasion of unwanted thoughts, feel disheartened by them and stop the practice of prayer whicn we want to keep up. The more these thoughts are ignored, the weaker will they grow and the prayer will engage our attention more and more. The argument that we should stop praying because of unwanted thoughts would be correct if we ourselves invited these thoughts. It would be sheer pretence to sit down to pray and invite other thoughts at the same time. Our mind should non-co-operate with bad thoughts.

[From Gujarati]
Harijanbandhu, 12-11-1933

212. LETTER TO DUDHIBEHN V. DESAI

November 7, 1933

CHI. DUDHIBEHN,

Dhiru seems to be keeping bad health. Ramabehn—who is here—feels unhappy because of that. Give me a report about him, and write separately to Ramabehn also. I hope you have taken Dhiru and others under your special care.

[1] This is from Chandrashankar Shukla's weekly letter and appeared under the title "Difficulty in Praying".

You must have received the letter I wrote to you at Rajkot. Write to me from time to time. Whenever you get any news about Valji, let me have it. Ask Manu and Mavo to write to me.

How is Kusum?

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C.W. 3137. Courtesy: Valji G. Desai

213. LETTER TO DHIRU C. JOSHI

WARDHA,
November 7, 1933

CHI. DHIRU,

I got your letter. Your handwriting in your letter to Rama was very bad. One should not write to anyone in such bad handwriting. The lines also were not straight. You are no longer a little child. There was some anger, too, in your letter. A child should never be angry with its mother. Don't you admit that we are poor? How can poor people spare money for visiting one another?

You should take care of your health. Let me know what your weight is. Be careful about what you eat. It would be better if you do not eat dal for some time. [Be][1] satisfied with rice and milk. Do you get fruit? Do you take cod liver[oil][2] In any case, don't [eat][3] more than you can digest. If you are careful, you can make your body as strong as steel. I will reply to your letter some other time.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 5314

[1], [2] & [3] The source is mutilated here.

214. LETTER TO MAHENDRA AND SUDARSHAN DESAI

WARDHA,
November 7, 1933

CHI. MANU AND MAVO,

I hope you got my letter[1] of New Year blessings. Write to me occasionally. Study with great care. My tour begins from tomorrow.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C.W. 3161. Courtesy: Valji G. Desai

215. SPEECH AT SELU

November 7, 1933

I believe it to be a happy augury that my tour commences with this sacred act.[2] I do not know if I shall be able to go through the programme that has been chalked out for me for tne coming nine months. Whether it is got through or not, my faith tells me that an undertaking which begins under such good auspices must result in good. The idol in the temple is not God. But since God resides in every atom, He resides in an idol. When rites of consecration are performed, special sanctitiy is attributed to the idol, and those who believe in temples perform worship by visiting them. I hold it a blasphemy to say that the Creator resides in a temple from which a particular class of His devotees sharing the faith in it are excluded. Ramdeoji has, therefore, well said that this will be a true temple only from today, when it is declared open to Harijans.

Harijan, 17-11-1933

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Mahendra V. Desai", p. 86.
[2] Gandhiji had opened a temple to Harijans.

216. SPEECH AT PUBLIC MEETING, SELU

November 7, 1933

It has been my firm belief for the last 50 years that there is no place in Hinduism for untouchability as we are observing it today. I have studied to the best of my ability all the religions of the world, and it has led me to the same conclusion. I should consider the sacrifice of my life as none too great for the sacred cause of the removal of this curse of untouchability. I have not a shadow of a doubt that, if untouchability is not removed root and branch, Hinduism is bound to perish, for no religion can nurture itself on the degradation of its votaries.

Harijan, 17-11-1933

217. SPEECH AT PUBLIC MEETING, WARDHA

November 7, 1933

It is good fortune for me that my tour begins at Wardha, which is the geographical centre of India. I want it also to be the centre of this movement. And I hope that the spirit with which Jamnalalji has opened his temple to Harijans and with which Vinoba and his companions have cast in their lot with Harijans will prove infectious and spread through the whole of the country.

Harijan, 17-11-1933

218. SPEECH AT SWEEPERS' MEETING, NAGPUR

November 8, 1933

What Mrs. Abhyankar said on behalf of hundreds of women like her has touched me deeply.[1] While she was speaking I looked at Sjt. Abhyankar, and I saw that his eyes had become wet. I have steeled my heart, and I do not shed tears easily; but these

[1] Offering her two golden bangles Mrs. Abhyankar had said, "Nowadays husbands leave little for their wives. I can, therefore, only make this humble offering for the service of Harijans."

words could not but move me. I admit I have been instrumental in making paupers of doctors, lawyers and merchants. I do not repent. On the contrary, I rejoice that many have embraced poverty voluntarily. Why should Mrs. Abhyankar, who is trying to identify herself, along with her husband, with the sweepers, put on golden bangles at all? In a poor country like India, where people walk for miles to get a dole of one pice per day, as they are doing in Orissa today, it does not behove anybody who cares for the poor to wear costly ornaments. In no other way can we identify ourselves with the Harijans. Those who have nothing else have God and are men of God—Harijans. Those who have wealth are men of wealth. All credit, therefore, to Motilalji, Das, Vithalbhai and many others whom I can mention and who parted with their possessions for the sake of the poor.

Harijan, 17-11-1933

219. ADVICE TO HARIJANS

NAGPUR,
November 8, 1933

Of course, I have told caste Hindus that they are responsible for whatever evil habits are to be noticed among the Harijans. But this does not mean that you should hug your evil habits. Harijans should contribute to this movement by cultivating cleanliness, both of mind and body, giving up carrion-eating which is looked upon with abhorrence by the whole of humanity, giving up drink, as also the differences of high and low that they are observing among themselves. When they go to temples, they should observe the rules applicable to all temple-goers.

Harijan, 17-11-1933

220. SPEECH AT PUBLIC MEETING, NAGPUR[1]

November 8, 1933

I am deeply grateful to you for the manifestation of this great affection. Thanks be to God that you have assembled in such numbers to listen to my message. The Chairman[2] is right when he says that this Harijan work is essentially religious from my standpoint. That it has many other results is equally true. There never has been a single truly religious activity but has had its influence on many departments of life. That perhaps is one of the tests by which we recognize a great religious movement. I would like to say in all humility, but with perfect confidence, that I have taken up this movement in no spirit of antagonism to any other religion or community. It would be impossible for any person to point to a single act of mine during the past 50 years which could be proved to have been antagonistic to any person or community. I have never believed anyone to be my enemy. My faith demands that I should consider no one as such. I may not wish ill to anything that lives. It is my certain conviction that, if the Hindu heart is completely purged of the taint of untouchability, the event will have its inevitable influence not only upon all the communities in India but on the whole world. This belief is daily becoming stronger. I cannot remove from my heart untouchability regarding several millions of human beings and harbour it towards some other millions. The very act of the Hindu heart getting rid of distinctions of high and low must cure us of mutual jealousies and distrust of and among other communities. It is for that reason that I have staked my life on this issue. In fighting this battle against untouchability, I am fighting for unity not only between Hindu touchables and Hindu untouchables but among Hindus, Muslims, Christians and all other different religious communities. Do not for one moment believe that I am interested in the numerical strength of Hindus. I have never throughout my life laid stress upon quantity. I have ever insisted upon quality at the sacrifice of quantity. If I collected a million false coins they would be a worthless burden to me. One true coin would be worth its value. A religion can-

[1] Gandhiji spoke in Hindi.

[2] Dr. N. B. Khare

not be sustained by the number of its lip followers denying in their lives its tenets. This great Hindu religion itself will perish, in spite of its so-called millions of followers, if its votaries persist in harbouring the evil of untouchability. Not because untouchables can be counted by the millions. It would perish even if they were a handful. Milk is poisoned and has to be thrown away whether you put a little or much arsenic in it. If we believe that we are all children of one and the same God and that God is Truth and Justice, how can there be untouchability amongst us, His children? God of Truth and Justice can never create distinctions of high and low among His own children. I, therefore, invite all without distinction of race and religion to assist this movement by praying for its complete success, so that we may all live in peace and friendship.

And if I want concord amongst all the communities professing different faiths, I cannot desire discord between the so-called sanatanists and reformers. I can harbour no ill will against sanatanists. I ask them to extend the same toleration to reformers that they would have the latter extend towards themselves. If they tolerate the faith and practice of others, why will they not tolerate the faith and practice of the reformers? They may not help so long as they regard untouchability as an integral part of Hinduism. I and fellow reformers firmly believe that untouchability is an evil; and if it is so and if the reformers will continue to exercise patience and gentleness, the heart of the sanatanists must melt. There can be no room for compulsion or violence in this great movement. I endeavour to place before the vast mass of Hindus the results of a belief derived from such prayerful study of the Hindu scriptures as has been possible for me, and from association with those who are learned in them and, what is more, from my practice based upon that belief. Surely, that cannot promote internal dissensions. I observe that many who oppose this movement have not taken the trouble to understand its implications. The object of this tour is to place the position of the reformers clearly before the public. And I am hoping that, as the scope of the activities of the Servants of Untouchables Society becomes known, the opposition to it will melt away. We want to change the hearts of those who today oppose the movement. We want to remove their distrust. We do not desire to compel them to act against their belief. We want to win them over to the reform by gentlest persuasion, by appealing to their reason and to their hearts. Love can never express itself by imposing sufferings on others. It can only express itself by self-suffering, by self-

purification. I am convinced that, if the reformers will show in their own lives an increasing purity, self-denial, and capacity for suffering, they will be sure to melt the hearts of those who are today saturated with untouchability, believing it to be a desirable part of Hinduism.

It is said that untouchables are so because of the evil in them. But are the 'touchables' better? Are they sinless? Indeed, defenders of untouchability claim that some people are always untouchables and that no amount of pure conduct can cure them of the taint with which they are born. They must remain social lepers for ever. The fact is that whatever weaknesses we may notice about untouchables are a reflection of our own weaknesses and sins. They are a direct result of the ill-treatment that we have heaped upon their devoted heads. Their real rise, therefore, depends upon the removing of untouchability root and branch and upon showing a growing purity in our own lives. Thus the movement is dependent, not so much upon pecuniary help, as upon correct conduct. Pecuniary help is to be an earnest of our determination to rid ourselves of the evil and to achieve self-purification.

The question is repeatedly asked whether the reform includes inter-dining. Though I have answered this question repeatedly, I must continue to repeat the answer as long as the question continues to be asked. Everybody knows what my personal views are. Since my youth upward I have consistently dined with all so long as the rules of cleanliness have been observed. But that has nothing to do with the present movement. Inter-dining and the rest is a question for each individual to determine for himself. The movement organized by the Servants of Untouchables Society stands for simple removal of untouchability in every shape and form, in so far as it is special to the so-called untouchables. They would have the same public rights and facilities as are enjoyed by every other Hindu, that is to say, they should have access to all public institutions, such as wells, schools, roads, temples, etc.

One word as to the objections raised against Anti-untouchability Bills. Sanatanists have contended that they constitute State interference in matters of religion. I suppose by interference is meant that which is undue. For it is possible to quote instances where State interference has been sought and has been inevitable in matters of religion. What is sought is freedom from external compulsion. I am no more in favour of such compulsion in matters affecting religion, than sanatanists. These Bills involve

no such compulsion, no undue interference. The interference sought is beneficial and unavoidable. If the State *compelled* the opening of temples to Harijans, it would without doubt be undue interference, but it cannot be undue when the State is called upon to legalize the voluntary opening by a stated majority of temple-goers or the trustees. Not to do so would be compulsion. The Temple-entry Bill merely seeks to legalize the action of a majority. The other Bill has been long overdue. It does not abolish untouchability altogether. It seeks to rob it of secular consequences. To clothe it with such consequences is to constitute an intolerable interference with the free exercise of religion. Nobody will deny that to make a religious obligation an obligation in law would be a gross and undue interference by the State. The observance of untouchability requires the voluntary recognition of it by both touchables and untouchables. For the State to *compel* observance by untouchables would be a gross interference in matters of religion. The Bill, therefore, seeks to remove the secular recognition of untouchability, without in any way interfering with the religious observance of it or the religious consequences of the breach of it. If the objectors mean, therefore, what they say and on a careful study should find that the Bills involve no compulsion, they should waive their objection.[1]

The poor man perhaps had nothing else to pay and he seems to have paid his all. It is an unsoiled cowrie, as Malaviyaji would call it. We attribute our earnings to fate, but what we give in the name of God, and for the service of His creatures bring us merit. Looking at it as a symbol of sacrifice, it is more precious than gold.

Harijan, 17-11-1933

221. LETTER TO VALLABHBHAI PATEL

NAGPUR,
Before the morning prayer, November 9, 1933

BHAI VALLABHBHAI,

I got your letter. You must not stop writing to me while I am touring. I will also write to you. What happened regarding Vithalbhai has not passed unnoticed by me. I also have been

[1] Gandhiji then auctioned the gifts which included the cowrie given to him at Katol. The remarks that follow are taken from Chandrashankar Shukla's weekly letter entitled "The First Week's Tour".

attacked strongly. I have paid no attention at all to these attacks. Even if I did, what could I do! If you stir dirty water, more dirt will come to the surface. I paid attention only to Subhas's services. As for the stories we hear regarding Vithalbhai's last wishes[1], we can say nothing. I, too, have my doubts as you have.

My work commenced from Tuesday. Wherever I go, large crowds assemble. They don't seem to resent my talking about untouchability. A fine temple near Wardha was thrown open to Harijans.[2] There was a large crowd such as had never been seen before in this city. My voice met the demand on it fairly well. Nor did I get tired. I have started with my weight 108 or 109. The collection also, I think, was good. After completing the C.P., I have to go to Delhi and from there straight to the South. Raja says that it is necessary to tour the South first. The opposition of the sanatanists comes mainly from there. I have to return to Wardha on Saturday. The Wardha taluka remains to be toured. Meanwhile Jawaharlal and others will come to see me. Ansari[3] has already arrived. Hence he also may join me. With me are Mira, Chandrashankar, Nayar, Ramnath (of the Sasta Sahitya of Delhi), Om and the wife of Rameshwar Birla's[4] son. The last will be with me for a few days only. Om has become a strong-willed girl. Thakkar Bapa also is in the party. Ba will leave Wardha on the 13th. She will reach Ahmedabad about the 15th or the 16th. This time she is very much agitated. She is restless no doubt. But she will go [to jail]. She is convinced that that is the only right course.

Please continue to write to me at the Wardha address.

Blessings to you both from

BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro–2: Sardar Vallabhbhaine, pp. 45-6

[1] It was reported that Vithalbhai Patel had bequeathed a large sum to Subhas Chandra Bose to be used at his discretion for propaganda abroad. Later, the Bombay High Court decided that the amount should go to Vithalbhai's legatees. Gandhiji persuaded the family to give it to the Congress for national service.

[2] *Vide* "Speech at Selu", p. 193.

[3] Dr. M. A. Ansari

[4] G. D. Birla's elder brother

222. LETTER TO MANIBEHN PATEL

November 9, 1933

CHI. MANI,

I have your letter. You have acted wisely in writing to me frankly. In future also do the same. If not you who else will write? I was surprised to learn that Dahyabhai misunderstood my action and got angry. But we need not pay attention to that. Perhaps he is not even acquainted with all the facts. I can even understand his being pained. You yourself should try to calm him as much as you can. If you wish, I will write to him and try to soothe him. I will like it better. You may show him this letter if you like.

Ba will leave Wardha on Tuesday. She will halt at Akola for a short while, i.e., for a few hours and then go there. At present she is in a rather confused state of mind. She is worried also. All the same, she herself announced her resolution of going [to jail]. You should try and strengthen it.

Eat well and improve your health as much as you can. Write to me regularly. Do take the rays as long as you can. You can receive the treatment even in Ahmedabad. What did you do regarding your teeth?

Jawaharlal and others are coming to Wardha on Saturday.

What did Mridu[1] do in Allahabad? Did she return satisfied? Ask her to write to me. What did she do about her teeth? If she has heard more about Saraladevi[2], she should let me have the news.

We had a very good meeting in Nagpur. The tour has started well. Let me know how the funeral went off.

Blessings from
BAPU

[From Gujarati]
Bapuna Patro–4: Manibehn Patelne, pp. 111-2

[1] Mridula Sarabhai
[2] Mridula Sarabhai's mother

223. LETTER TO GANGABEHN B. JHAVERI

November 9, 1933

CHI. GANGABEHN,

I got your letter. Serve people as well as you can and be contented. Seeing other men's mansions, we don't demolish our own hut. The happiness which people may enjoy in mansions is possible in huts, too. You are doing good work in running a school for Harijan pupils. If you live exclusively on milk and fruit, that is bound to do you good. You need not, then, eat anything else. Nanibehn should write to me. Write always at Wardha. Ask Mahesh also to write to me.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 3119

224. INTERVIEW TO PRESS

November 9, 1933

Questioned whether he would issue a statement to the Press in connection with the all-India anti-untouchability tour, the Mahatma said that there was nothing to warrant a statement from him. All that he wanted to say in that connection had been said by him in his address at the Nagpur public meeting the previous night. He said he would be prepared to answer questions but warned them not to improvise questions.[1]

Q. How many years do you think it will take for complete removal of untouchability at the present rate of progress?

A. It is more than I can answer. It is a question of a change of the hearts of millions of human beings.

Q. Will you be prepared to receive swaraj before this curse is removed?

A. The question is badly put. There is no meaning in asking whether I shall be prepared to receive swaraj if untouchability is not removed by then. Swaraj is not a matter of receiving or taking. It is one of evolution. We either grow to it from day

[1] This paragraph is from *Hitavada*.

to day or we go away from it. If we, as a nation, are becoming more and more conscious of ourselves of the fundamental unity of millions, then we are certainly progressing towards it. Whereas, if we are dissolving, then we are receding from it.

Q. Do you not realize that the depressed classes have even now got their own superstitions and that they very much hesitate to associate with, for instance, Brahmins, even if they are asked to do so?

A. No, I do not; because, if what you say is true, it means that they want to remain in their present state of degradation. I cannot understand a social leper glorying in his leprosy. If the so-called depressed classes are so disgusted with the so-called high-class Hindus that they want absolutely to cut themselves adrift from Hinduism and Hindus, then they form a separate entity, which means they establish a new religion, or they accept any of the other prevailing religions of India. That is a thing which can happen, if the so-called higher classes continue to wallow in their imaginary superiority and do not perform the elementary duty of regarding the Harijans as their kith and kin. This anti-untouchability movement is an attempt to do this elementary duty by the Harijans.

Q. Harijans seem to be unwilling to mix with caste-Hindus. Is it not a fact?

A. My experience is wholly different. I have talked with thousands of Harijans. They are eager to associate with the higher classes, if the latter behave themselves. What is true is that they distrust the higher classes, and where they do not distrust them, they are afraid of them. And there is this unfortunate additional fact that the notion of inferiority from birth has been so much injected into them that they consider themselves doomed by God to eternal inferiority. This must be a matter of shame and humiliation for every thinking *savarna* Hindu.[1]

The best way for the so-called caste Hindus was to forget that they were higher than anybody else. It was all a reflection of what was today a fact among the higher classes. It ought to cause no surprise to higher classes when they discover that there are differences in untouchability and therefore among untouchables.

Harijan, 1-12-1933, and *Hitavada*, 12-11-1933

[1] The following is from the *Hitavada*.

225. SPEECH AT STUDENTS' MEETING, NAGPUR

November 9, 1933

I know this tussle between English and Hindi is almost an eternal tussle.[1] Whenever I have addressed student audiences, I have been surprised by the demand for English. You know, or ought to know, that I am a lover of the English language. But I do believe that the students of India, who are expected to throw in their lot with the teeming millions and to serve them, will be better qualified if they pay more attention to Hindi than to English. I do not say that you should not learn English; learn it by all means. But, so far as I can see, it cannot be the language of the millions of Indian homes. It will be confined to thousands or tens of thousands, but it will not reach the millions. Therefore, I am delighted when the students ask me to speak in Hindi.

You, both the speakers, have spoken of me in terms, which if I believed to be true of myself, I do not know where I would be. But I know my place. I am a humble servant of India, and in trying to serve India, I serve humanity at large. I discovered in my early days that the service of India is not inconsistent with the service of humanity. As I grew older in years, and I hope also in wisdom, I saw that the discovery was well made, and after nearly 50 years of public life, I am able to say today that my faith in the doctrine, that the service of one's nation is not inconsistent with the service of the world, has grown. It is a good doctrine. Its acceptance alone will ease the situation in the world and stop the mutual jealousies between nations inhabiting this globe of ours. You have said truly that, in taking up this war against untouchability, I have not confined myself to Hinduism. I have said more than once that, if untouchability is removed in its fulness from the Hindu heart, it will have far-reaching consequences, inasmuch as it touches millions of human beings. As I said last night to the great meeting in Nagpur, if untouchability is really removed from the Hindu heart, that is, if the high-caste Hindus purge themselves of this terrible taint, we shall soon discover that we are all one and not different peoples, Hindus, Muslims, Christians, Parsis, whatever we may call our-

[1] Gandhiji had begun his speech in Hindi. But as there was a cry for English, he spoke in English.

selves. We shall feel the unity, once the barrier of untouchability is removed. As I have often said, untouchability is a hydra-headed monster, appearing in many shapes. Some of them are very subtle. If I have jealousy for any human being, that also is a species of untouchability. I do not know if my dream about the removal of untouchability will be fully realized while I am living. All those who are religiously inclined, those who believe not in formal religion but in the essence of religion, cannot but believe in the removal of a subtle type of untouchability that affects the lives of a vast mass of humanity. If Hindu hearts can be purged of this evil, our eyes of understanding will be more and more opened. It is not possible to estimate the gain to humanity when untouchability is really removed. You can now have no difficulty in understanding why I have staked my life for this one thing.

If you, the students who have assembled here, have followed me so far and understood the implications of this mission of mine, you will soon extend the help I want from you. Many students have written to me asking what part they can take in helping this movement. It is a surprise to me that students are obliged to ask this question. The field is so vast and near you that you need not ask the question as to what you may do and what you may not. It is not a political question. It may become one, but for you and me, for the time being, it is not connected with politics. My life is governed by religion. I have said that even my politics are derived from my religion. I never lost sight of the principle that governs my life when I began dabbling in politics. As this is a humanitarian campaign, students must devote a part of their spare time, if not the whole, to the service of thousands of Harijans. By giving me this magnificent purse you have certainly equalled the brightest records of students' meetings which I have addressed in my many peregrinations throughout the length and breadth of India. But I want much more from you. I have found that, if I get many helpers who can give their spare time, much work can be done. This work cannot be done by hired labour. With hired labour we cannot go to Harijan quarters and sweep their roads, enter their houses and wash their children. I have described in the columns of the *Harijan* what students can do.[1] A Harijan teacher has shown what a Herculean task it is for him to tackle. Even wild children are better than Harijan children. Wild children are not sunk in

[1] *Vide* Vol. LIV, pp. 264-6.

utter degradation, as the Harijan children are, nor do they live in such filthy surroundings. This problem cannot be tackled by hired labour. No amount of money can enable me to do this. It must be your prerogative. It is an acid test of the education received by you in schools and colleges. Your worth will not be measured by your ability to make faultless English speeches. Your worth will be measured by the service you render to the poor and not by Government posts worth Rs. 60 or Rs. 600 that you may have got. I wish you would do this work in the spirit I suggest. I have not met a single student who has said that he cannot spare one hour per day. If you write your diary from day to day, you will find that you waste many a precious hour in the 365 days of the year. If you want to turn your education to good account, you will turn your attention to this work while this hurricane campaign lasts. Erstwhile students are serving Harijans within a radius of 5 miles round about Wardha. They are doing good silent work; therefore, you do not know them. I invite you to see their work. It is hard but pleasurable. It will give you joy, greater than your cricket or tennis. I have repeatedly said that money will come if I have real, intelligent, honest workers. As a boy of 18 I began my education in begging. I have seen that money can be found easily if we have the right kind of workers. Money alone will never satisfy me. I would ask you to pledge yourselves to devote a definite number of spare hours to Harijan service. As you, Mr. President, have said, I am a dreamer. I am indeed a practical dreamer. My dreams are not airy nothings. I want to convert my dreams into realities as far as possible. Therefore, I must hasten to auction the gifts I have received from you.

Harijan, 17-11-1933

226. *EXTRACTS FROM SPEECHES*[1]

[Before *November 10, 1933*][2]

For me the money you give is a token of your identification with the cause. Mere money will not avail; I must have your heart also with your money.[3]

[1]&[2] These are reproduced from Chandrashankar Shukla's "Weekly Letter" which says the speeches were delivered before Gandhiji visited Gondia, which he did on November 10.

[3] What follows was spoken at a wayside meeting of villagers who made an on-the-spot collection.

You may not think that you have lost your money. Those who have given have gained it, and those who, though able, have refrained have in reality lost it. The money spent in gambling, drink and lust is a double loss, for you lose your money and lose also your reputation and health. Whereas those who give even a pice for the service of humanity gain more than they give. Untouchability is a blot on Hinduism. It is a canker eating into its vitals. I see with my eyes and smell with my nose that the body of Hinduism is in the process of destruction. If you think with me, you should contribute your mite to this cause. Once we lose the spiritual power of Hinduism I do not know where we should be. A man without religion is like a ship without a rudder. The money, therefore, that you give is to my mind a token of your desire to save Hinduism from spiritual destruction.

Harijan, 17-11-1933

227. NOTES

True Ahimsa

Jamshed Mehta, a true servant of humanity, sends me a rendering, received by him from a friend, of a discourse on ahimsa in *Jnaneshwari Gita*[1], Chapter XIII. I have taken the liberty of further condensing it and putting it in a form perhaps more easily to be understood, without in any way marring the sense of the original. Those who still harbour untouchability in their bosoms will do well to test it on the touchstone provided by the great saint of Maharashtra. Is untouchability compatible with his definition of ahimsa? Let the extract speak for itself:

> Before considering what is real ahimsa, it is necessary to see what it is not. In order to secure a good rainfall, people perform what they call sacrifices in which they kill animals. This is not ahimsa. Is it not like cutting off one's own hands so that they may be cooked and served as food? Is it wise to cut off all the branches of a tree, in order to put a fence round it, with those branches? Then, again, to save many people from diseases, people cut away whole trees, or take out all the bark, or make extracts of living animals and take out secretions from other creatures. Is it not like pulling down a house in order to build a verandah or shed

[1] Jnaneshwar's Marathi commentary on the *Bhagavad Gita*

for the house, and burning your clothes in order to have a fire to warm yourself?

Real ahimsa or love originates in one's heart and is known by one's conduct even as gold is known by its qualities. A man who is full of love never forgets that the world is full of life like his and takes great care that he does not harm any living thing. He sees his love reflected in the eyes of those whom he meets. He is the friend of all. As a cat holds her kittens between her teeth without hurting them, so does a man of love deal with all with whom he comes in contact. He walks gently and noiselessly lest his footsteps may disturb the sleep of others. He always makes room for those who need it. He so regulates his voice as not to jar on others. He is silent when he need not speak. His speech is never intended to offend anyone. He does not want to upset other people's plans or to frighten them. He never utters words which lead to discussions and disputations, or which hurt the feelings of others. There is no deceit in his talk, nor doubt nor ambiguity. He never stares lest his stare may offend people. He does not move his hands aimlessly as he has no desire to harm even a mosquito. He does not carry even a stick, not to speak of other weapons. His hands are used only for salutation or service.

These are but the outward signs of the inner abiding love as a plant is of the seed that has borne it. His mind is the Master of all the organs. Thus, real ahimsa is an attitude of the mind expressed through the different sense organs. He alone who is filled with love for all that lives and whose mind, speech and action are in full union is truly noble.

Harijan, 10-11-1933

228. A COMMON PLATFORM

A correspondent sends me an essay by Sir C. V. Kumaraswamy Sastriar, ex-High Court Judge, Madras. It occupies three sides of a foolscap in print. It is written on behalf of 'Sanatanists'. It is an attempt to show that untouchability has existed from time immemorial and that the legislation such as is contemplated is futile. It, however, concludes with this significant paragraph:

> Several social inequalities and exclusive outlooks are being softened or removed by time and education. The old order is changing, and with

it the older conception of humanity. Several communities once considered depressed or servile have, owing to rise in education and material well-being, become possessed of rights and privileges. No lover of India would claim that communities and castes should be in a state of antagonism, or that social injustice and inequalities should not be adjusted. But nobody can view without pain and alarm the methods adopted and the aids sought, which will only accentuate the ill-feeling between the caste Hindus and the depressed classes, without any considerable material advantage to the latter. Their state of depression lies in other and deeper causes and its removal lies in a combined effort by the caste Hindus to improve their material and educational state.

This paragraph, in my humble opinion, vitiates the prior reasoning in support of untouchability as a sacrosanct religious institution. It seems to admit that it is a social evil which the learned ex-Judge will gladly see uprooted. And every reformer will agree with him when he says "nobody can view without pain and alarm the methods adopted and the aids sought, which will only accentuate the ill-feeling between the caste Hindus and the depressed classes, without any considerable material advantage to the latter." Only, the reformer must add that Sir Kumaraswamy's fears are imaginary. Reformers have adopted no method and sought no aid so as to accentuate ill-feeling. Sir Kumaraswamy has not given himself time to study what the reformers are doing and how they are doing it. Indeed, I can show him that they are even postponing the material advantage to the Harijans where ill-feeling, already existing, is likely to grow into a fight with blows. Thus, for instance, reformers have been postponing summary action even regarding the use of certain public wells to which Harijans are beyond doubt entitled in law. As for the aids sought, reformers will readily agree that social prejudices cannot be removed by summoning the assistance of law. But they do invoke and insist on legal and legislative aid when the law is interpreted to uphold untouchability. No reform in respect of an evil can succeed in the teeth of legal protection thereof. It is hardly necessary to state that legislative obstacles can only be removed by legislation and in no other way. Reformers merely seek to remove legislative hindrance and nothing more. What they desire is that untouchability should have no legal sanction. They recognize that, even when that is withdrawn, as a social evil it will demand attention for a long time to come.

I welcome the last sentence of the paragraph. When there is "a combined effort by the caste Hindus to improve their (the Harijans') material and educational state", untouchability will

not be long in disappearing from the land. If the sanatanists distrust the reformers, let them work independently. Will Sir Kumaraswamy move the 'sanatanists' to action? If he succeeds, there will be no ill-feeling left. Does he know that in the name of sanatana dharma its so-called representatives have burned the crops of innocent Harijans, assaulted them and otherwise molested them when in the exercise of their just and legal rights?

Harijan, 10-11-1933

229. FOR HARIJAN TEACHERS

One who is responsible for the management of over twenty-five Harijan schools writes a long letter stating the difficulties experienced in the management of the schools and asks how I would conduct them if I had the direct management thereof. I need not recount his difficulties which he has described carefully. What I am about to say is an attempt to answer them.

While we are bound to give scholarships and other help to those Harijan boys and girls who attend the established schools, there is no reason whatever slavishly to reproduce the mode and methods of those schools in the ones under our own management.

We have to recognize that we get Harijan children with great difficulty to attend any school at all. We cannot expect any degree of regularity in them and, thanks to our past criminal neglect, they are so unkempt that we have, in the beginning stages, to handle them in a manner wholly different from the ordinary.

On first admission their bodies have to be minutely examined and thoroughly cleaned. Their clothes might have to be cleaned and patched. The first daily lesson, therefore, will for some time consist of applied hygiene and sanitation and simple needle-work. I should use no books probably for the whole of the first year. I should talk to them about things with which they are familiar and, doing so, correct their pronunciation and grammar and teach them new words. I should note all the new words they may learn from day to day so as to enable me to use them frequently till they have them fixed in their minds regularly. The teacher will not give discourses but adopt the conversational method. Through conversations he will give his pupils progressive instruction in history, geography and arithmetic. History will begin with that of our

own times, and then, too, of events and of persons nearest us, and geography will begin with that of the neighbourhood of the school. Arithmetic will begin with the sums applicable to the pupil's homes. Having tried the method myself, I know that infinitely more knowledge can be given to the pupils through it, and without strain on them, than can be given through the orthodox method, within a given time. Knowledge of the alphabet should be treated as a separate subject altogether. The letters should be treated as pictures which the children will first be taught to recognize and name. Writing will follow as part of the drawing lesson. Instead of making daubs of their letters, pupils should be able to make perfect copies of the models placed before them. They would not, therefore, be called upon to draw the letters till they had acquired control over their fingers and the pen. It is criminal to stunt the mental growth of a child by letting him know as much only as he can get through a book he can incoherently read in a year. We do not realize that, if a child was cut off from the home life and was merely doomed to the school, he would be a perfect dunce for several years. He picks up information and language unconsciously through his home, not in the schoolroom. Hence do we experience the immense difference between pupils belonging to cultured homes and those belonging to uncouth homes, which are no homes in reality.

In the scheme I have adumbrated, the schoolmaster is expected to treat his occupation seriously and feel one with his pupils. I know that, in putting the scheme into operation, the want of schoolmasters of the right type is the greatest difficulty. But we shall not get the right type till we have made the right beginning.

I must postpone the consideration of the stage when we have to arm the pupils with books.[1]

Harijan, 10-11-1933

[1] *Vide* "School Books", 1-12-1933.

230. LETTER TO MANSHANKAR J. TRIVEDI

November 10, 1933

CHI. MANU,

You did well in seeing the Princess[1]. Now tell her the whole thing yourself. I could barely write a short letter to her. I didn't discuss all the details. Write to me. Elizabeth[2] also may write if she wishes. You must have heard about Kakasaheb's seven-day fast. . . .[3] has disappointed me.

Blessings from
BAPU

[PS.]

Address Wardha.

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 22621

231. INTERVIEW TO PRESS

NAGPUR,
[*November 10, 1933*][4]

Four days is too little time compared to the nine months in front of me. Therefore, I cannot say whether I shall be able to bear its strain. I can only say that, if God wills that I should finish this tour, then, in spite of all this strain, He will give me the strength to finish it.

Harijan, 17-11-1933

[1] Efy Aristarchi

[2] A Roman Catholic whom Gandhiji gave the name Vimala. The addressee intended to marry her.

[3] The name has been omitted.

[4] The interview was given on the fourth day of the tour which commenced on November 7, 1933.

232. SPEECH AT GONDIA

November 10, 1933

Gandhiji deprecated the attitude of the higher castes if the allegations[1] made by the Harijans were true. He wanted a cleansing of the hearts and not a mere show. If, however, they wanted to keep them separate still, they must declare so openly and be prepared to meet the consequences. He could not reply to the other charge against the *bidi* merchants, as he had no knowledge of the same. He pointed out how both depended on the co-operation of each other and asked them to give up aloofness. The term Harijan which the previous speaker resented as showing separateness, Mahatmaji said, had been chosen by a Harijan and not invented by him. He said he preferred to call himself a Harijan. He asked the *bidi* merchants to give fair treatment to their labourers, and thanked them for the donations they freely gave to the cause taken up by him. Mahatmaji then referred to the sales of khadi in the local Bhandar which he said were very poor. For a town like Gondia, only Rs. 1,000 worth of khadi was sold per month. He showed how the Harijans stood to gain by people espousing the cause of khadi.

Hitavada, 16-11-1933

233. TELEGRAM TO JAWAHARLAL NEHRU

[November 11, 1933][2]

FIND UNABLE GIVE TWO DAYS. CAN GIVE THREE HOURS ANY MONDAY AFTERNOON. TWENTY-SEVENTH INSTANT RAIPUR. FOURTH DECEMBER JUBBULPORE.

Gandhi-Nehru Papers, 1933. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

[1] A Harijan boy had complained against the caste Hindus who made a show of unity and sympathy and against the *bidi* factory owners who did not treat their Harijan employees well.

[2] *Vide* the following item.

234. LETTER TO JAWAHARLAL NEHRU

WARDHA,
November 11, 1933

MY DEAR JAWAHARLAL,

I have just returned from a heavy tour programme and having read your letter telegraphed as follows:[1]

It is impossible to give more than one day and more than three hours. It is difficult enough even to give three hours. The programme is so packed that hardly any time is given for rest. Four hours for rest, bath and dinner, have hitherto dwindled down to two. A programme in which tens of thousands of people are concerned cannot easily be postponed or disturbed. The enclosed copy[2] will give you an idea of the work, and where you find hours of rest, except for Friday afternoon, they have been encroached upon, changing the time from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. to 12 o'clock to 2 p.m.

I entirely agree with you that the proposed conversation will not clarify matters to any satisfactory extent. If the A.I.C.C. meeting is held, I do not know how I shall be able to attend the sittings. Will it not be better for me to abstain from attending? If it is desirable, I will send my views in writing. The opinion I have expressed in my public letter[3] to you is becoming more and more confirmed.

You must have seen Lahiri's statement about the Hijli Prison. It more than confirms Satisbabu's letter. I have heard from the Governor.[4] His Secretary says that "His Excellency will look into the matter to which you refer".

I have read the appeal for the Hospital.[5] I hope it will have the response it deserves.

I carefully read your letter about the Government demand. In anything you do about Swaraj Bhawan, do you not think that you should consult the trustees and not merely inform them?

[1] *Vide* the preceding item.

[2] *Vide* Appendix I.

[3] *Vide* Vol. LV, pp. 426-30.

[4] Gandhiji wrote to the Governor of Bengal on November 2, 1933; *vide* p. 170-1.

[5] *Vide* "Letter to Jawaharlal Nehru", pp. 160-1.

I have not been able even to show your letter to Jamnalalji for sheer want of time. He twits me by saying that as I am in Wardha you are ignoring him entirely, not even acknowledging his letters. I told him that your letters to me are as much for him as for me and that just now the few of us who are out have little time for performing acts of mere courtesy.

You cannot expect rapid progress for an old patient like Mother. The wonder to me is that she has survived the attack she had. I hope the progress though slow continues.

Love.

BAPU

Encl. 1

Gandhi-Nehru Papers, 1933. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

235. *INTERVIEW TO THE PRESS*

WARDHA,
November 11, 1933

I do not know what better proof any critic can demand than these meetings and demonstrations that untouchability is rapidly disintegrating. This does not mean that the mass mind has changed altogether. But if the evidence of the last four days is sustained throughout the tour I should feel certain about the cremation of the untouchability monster within a measurable distance of time.

Harijan, 17-11-1933

236. *SPEECH AT DEOLI*[1]

November 11, 1933[2]

I am essentially a lover of peace. I do not have the slightest wish to create dissensions among the Hindus. It would be best for the sanatanists and reformers to confer among them-

[1] Gandhiji had gone to Deoli to open a temple to Harijans but some sanatanists opposed the plan. A *shastri* from the South requested him to stop the movement and avoid creating dissensions in Hindu society.

[2] From *The Bombay Chronicle*

selves and make an effort to arrive at an understanding. But if that effort fails, both parties should resort to peaceful and honourable methods and both should learn to tolerate one another. I believe myself to be both a sanatanist and a reformer. I have tried to gather in me all the goodwill which caste Hindus can have towards Harijans. God alone knows how far I have succeeded in the effort. I am also trying, as best as an imperfect human being like myself can, to see with Harijans' eyes and to realize what is going on in their hearts. It is not given to man to know the whole truth. His duty lies in living up to the truth as he sees it and, in doing so, to resort to the purest means, i..e, to non-violence. I do not want to hurt the feelings of the sanatanists. I want to convert them to my view in the gentlest manner. I want, if I can, to steal into their hearts. I would love to melt their hearts by my suffering. I firmly believe that untouchability as we practise it today has no sanction in the Shastras. But I do not wish to enter into a discussion of what the Shastras support and what they do not. I only put before you, as humbly as I can, the truth as I see it, and am prepared to sacrifice my life, if need be, in an unceasing effort to live up to that truth. It is clear to my mind, beyond the shadow of a doubt, that, if untouchability is not eradicated, both Hinduism and the Hindus are bound to perish. Ever since I was a child of ten I have considered untouchability as a sin. My heart has never been able to reconcile itself to untouchability based on birth. I tried to study the Shastras to the best of my ability. I consulted as many pundits as I could. And a majority of them have supported my view. But truth is not to be found in books. Truth resides in every human heart, and one has to search for it there, and be guided by truth as one sees it. But no one has a right to coerce others to act according to his own view of truth.

I would appeal to the temple-goers here who are in favour of Harijans' entry into the temple to go into the temple only after the sanatanists, who have blocked the way, leave the place. We do not want to score a victory over them. Do not be angry with them, do not insult them; on the contrary, feed them if they are hungry and would accept your hospitality. We have to win them over by love. We may not ask for police aid against them.[1]

I do not say this because I am a non-co-operator but because I believe in the law of non-retaliation. Again, I believe that religion can never be protected by force or hooliganism, but by

[1] The following paragraph is from *Harijan*, 17-11-1933.

penance and suffering. I am, therefore, prepared to give up my life, if need be, as a final act of penance.

He hoped that those who were arrested would be discharged and that the temple would be opened to Harijans without delay and without friction.

Harijan, 24-11-1933

237. A PICE PER HEAD

Shri Harakhchand writes in his letter[1] of October 26.

I hope readers will not be annoyed with me for giving all this description. It is not proper if someone says that it is an old story or that the floods are a past event. When the floods came, those who were destined to die died. Those who survived immediately got all possible help. But it becomes the moral obligation of the kind-hearted to look after those who were rendered homeless till the next season is over and the new harvest is ready. Such letters prove that this is the right time for fulfilling this duty.

Readers will find that in some places the rice given per head is less than what even one pice can fetch. If this picture is clearly impressed on his mind, the reader would not be happy to partake of his meal without keeping aside a part of it for such unhappy people. If all contributed according to their capacity, thousands will get enough to keep themselves alive. Mill-owners can send clothes. Khadi lovers can send khadi. Only recently Harakhchand received an anonymous *hundi* of Rs. 1,000 for distributing khadi.

[From Gujarati]

Harijanbandhu, 12-11-1933

238. LETTER TO GANGA PODDAR

[*November 12, 1933*][2]

I am writing to Rameshwar. It was of course a grave sin but you can atone for and forget it. Bring back the ornaments and resolve against ever committing such a lapse.

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 216

[1] The letter is not translated here. *Vide* also "Pice Per Day", p. 242.

[2] *Vide* the following item.

239. LETTER TO RAMESHWARDAS PODDAR

WARDHA,
November 12, 1933

CHI. RAMESHWARDAS,

Ganga has certainly committed a grave lapse but she repents of it now. One who repents deserves to be forgiven. Do not say a word [of reproach] to Ganga; receive her with love. The ornaments have to be brought back, that she will do. You can send her back afterwards. Remain calm, chant Ramanama. We are all prone to errors but those who confess theirs are blessed. Let us all wish that Ganga's repentance proves sincere.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 174

240. LETTER TO MANILAL AND SUSHILA GANDHI

WARDHA,
November 13, 1933

CHI. MANILAL AND SUSHILA,

I cannot reply immediately to your letters. I don't have time even today, but have found some to write this letter as Kishorelal told me the substance of your letter to Nanabhai. If I could, I would certainly have tried to guide you in regard to the dispute among you there.[1] But I really cannot judge in such matters unless I see all the people concerned. However, why do you always feel dependent on me? Go on doing fearlessly what you feel to be the right thing. Don't mind if you make mistakes. Whenever you realize that you have made a mistake, rectify it unhesitatingly without thinking of the consequences. If you always act thus, you will be able to judge what the right course is in every matter. I shall not live for ever. You should try to swim with your own strength. That is the right thing to do. Don't

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Vallabhbhai Patel", 25-12-1933.

mind if you drown while trying to swim. If you realize that you have made a mistake in adopting the course which you are following at present, you should abandon it. If you don't see any mistake, you must cling to it no matter even if you die or become a pauper in consequence. But, while doing that, do not get angry with anybody or adopt untruthful means or lose your peace of mind or patience. Bear the hardships which may follow. Instead of seeking the protection of an imperfect father, seek that of the Father of all, of Omnipotent God. That will make you strong. This is the only lesson I wish to teach you. If you have learnt it, you may rest assured that you have received perfect education.

You will read accounts of my tour in papers and elsewhere. I don't have time to give you other news either.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 4811

241. NOTE TO VIDYA A. HINGORANI

WARDHA ASHRAM,
November 13, 1933

Hindus are in grave error. They have become cowards. They are not prepared for sacrifice; they do not wish to purify themselves nor do they want to give up their bad habits. What else can you expect?[1] In these circumstances, those of us who are awakened should do their duty by purifying themselves through sacrifice and have the faith that therein lies the ultimate solution of the problem.

BAPU

From a microfilm of the Hindi. Courtesy: National Archives of India and Anand T. Hingorani

[1] The reference is to the riot in Sind resulting from the marriage of a Hindu girl with a Muslim.

242. LETTER TO F. MARY BARR

HINGANGHAT,
November 13, 1933

CHI. MARY,

I did not know that you were going to Betul so soon. I am writing this during the few minutes I have at Hinganghat. You will read all the account of my doings in *Harijan*.

I thought Amla might listen if she knew who had made the suggestion. Hers is a difficult case. But God succeeds where and when we fail. Let us trust her to God. I hope you are keeping well body and mind.

You must write often and that to Wardha from where letters will be redirected.

Love.

BAPU

From a photostat: G.N. 6015. Also C.W. 3341. Courtesy: F. Mary Barr

243. LETTER TO JAWAHARLAL NEHRU

Unrevised

CHANDA,
November 13, 1933

MY DEAR JAWAHARLAL,

I have just arrived in Chanda and whilst the others are coming, I have taken up your letter. It is now 9 p.m. The programme is fairly strenuous. I was in Hinganghat at 6 p.m.

Tiwari has handed me your letter. I have also read yours to J[1]. So far as he knows there is probably very little left in A.I.C.C. a/c. The books are not with him. He has sent for the accounts. Meanwhile I have suggested that Rs. 500 might be sent at least on a/c. If the funds are exhausted, I do not know what is to be done. I have an earmarked a/c at my disposal. I am loath to part with that fund. I am drawing upon it for Hardikar and I want to do likewise for the list of workers you have sent me. It too will be soon exhausted. In the circumstances, the office staff has to be reduced if not given up altogether, i.e.,

[1] Jamnalal Bajaj who was the treasurer of the A.I.C.C. at this time

if the civil resistance movement is to continue. The more I look about me, the more convinced I feel that those who are in the fight will have to do without funds except such as may remain in hands such as mine. I have just managed for Gujarat and Karnatak. The lady who was to have paid Rs. 50,000 has just sent the message that she would like to pay Rs. 10,000 to you. If she does, I shall expect you to pay the U.P. workers out of this. Anyway I think it is best for you to confer with Jamnalalji and if necessary with me as to the management of the funds that are still available. I have sent notices everywhere that no more help need be expected through me. I am trying to run through whatever is at my disposal.

Now about the informal meeting. You will see from the programme herewith that I am in Delhi between 10 and 14 December. Thakkar Bapa says I can take up the bulk of 14th for our meeting. I am supposed to entrain for Andhra on 14th immediately after 4 p.m. Ansari who was with me on Sunday suggested Delhi. You will now make your choice—24th inst., 4th Dec. or 14th Dec., i.e., if the conference is to come off at all.

As to the Harijan tour, I am not worrying at all over the proposed boycott in U.P. I am finding no difficulty here. Congressmen and non-Congressmen are co-operating in arranging for the tour. You are unnecessarily hard on the liberals whom I would include among non-Congressmen. We have to get work even from them. They work according to their lights. In any case, I do not want a single Congressman to work for this movement who would go to jail. I have said this to everyone who has come to me. I am sending back some of the best workers who have just come out. Ba I hope is going soon and so is Manibehn Patel. Kakasaheb, Swami, Surendra are going. Those Congressmen who are too weak to go or who have lost faith in civil disobedience and who are anxious to work for the Harijan cause I am taking, but not those who want Harijan work as a mere cloak. This movement, if it is to become universal, must be able to continue even if every Congressman is in jail or it must perish. I feel too that Congressmen should not handle this movement to strengthen the C. D. movement or the Congress hold on the people. It would be going about it the wrong way. Such an attitude will damage both the Congress and the Harijan cause. Cases of this type have come under my notice. I have expressed strong disapproval of any such work. I think I have now sufficiently answered all your questions. If not, please ask again.

You will have noticed that the Sarkar Salaam[1] in Hijli has stopped. Shall I write to Sir Tej about the Frontier treatment?

I had a nice letter from Krishna. She seems to be happy in her new home.

I hope Mother's progress continues.

Love.

BAPU

Gandhi-Nehru Papers, 1933. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

244. LETTER TO RAMNIKLAL MODI

CHANDA,
November 14, 1933

CHI. RAMNIKLAL,

You seem to be worrying about Tara. I hope this is a polite way of saying things. You and I can't afford to worry seriously. If we do, we would discredit the knowledge that we profess. How would it seem if we, who recite the *Gita* daily and read in it that we should not worry, still go on worrying every day about something or the other? I met Tara. I liked her attitude, etc., very much. About her dental trouble, she is trying some treatment.

Surendra told me everything about you. These days all of us are being tested well. We may call it the primary test.

I am writing this letter while touring. I rose at three in the morning and, after brushing the teeth, the first thing I am doing is this. The prayer will start at 4.20. I am in Chanda just now. We shall leave for Saoli at six. Probably you know that Harijans there spin and weave. The party going to Saoli is a large one. It includes Janakibehn, Radhakishan[2], Dhotre and others. Those accompanying me on the tour are Thakkar Bapa, Vishwanath, Chandrashankar, Ramnath, Mirabehn, Nayar and Om. We have to work hard during the tour. The crowds are equally big wherever we go. What else need I write about? You must have known everything through Tara. If I had the time, I would write a long letter. I do not, cannot, write to you and to many others. I do wish to write, but I have to suppress the wish.

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Governor of Bengal", pp. 170-1.

[2] Radhakrishna Bajaj

Surendra and Durbari are still in Wardha. A Japanese sadhu has come to live there. His cheerfulness is a joy to see. He is learning Hindi. Ba left yesterday with Swami for Ahmedabad.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 4175. Also C.W. 1674. Courtesy: Ramniklal Modi

245. LETTER TO TARABEHN R. MODI

November 14, 1933

CHI. TARA,

I had promised to give you a letter to Ramniklal, but I think I could not do so and I had been feeling unhappy because of that. I had decided to write the letter the first thing this morning. It[1] is enclosed. When will Ramniklal get it now? Write to me always at Wardha. Let me know what you do regarding the teeth. Write about all the thoughts that may come to you, and also describe the experiences that you get from time to time. I hope you have made it a regular practice to read *Harijanbandhu*.

Do you know that Om is accompanying me on the tour? There are many others also just now, up to Saoli. We are learning many things. The body seems to be bearing the burden well enough.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 4176. Also C.W. 1675. Courtesy: Ramniklal Modi

[1] *Vide* the preceding item.

246. LETTER TO VALLABHBHAI PATEL

CHANDA,
November 14, 1933

BHAI VALLABHBHAI,

I must have your letters regularly. You have made me grow accustomed to them. We are in Chanda today. It is four o'clock just now. At six we leave for Saoli.

I didn't like the manner in which things were done regarding Vithalbhai. All the same, I have learnt much from here, from the way in which people attended in large crowds. They don't worship the man. They worship, in their own way and on their own terms, the image of the man which they have formed in their minds and which they love. I have not read the accounts in papers and do not know details. But I have got a complete picture in my mind of the whole thing.

I learnt from *The Times* [*of India*] about eggs having been thrown during the students' meeting[1] in Nagpur. I didn't see anything in the hall. I didn't even see any commotion anywhere. Nor do I know anybody else in the hall having noticed anything. Chandrashankar told me only this, that an egg had fallen on Om. Nobody knows whether it was aimed at her or the ex-president sitting by her side or at me. The truth is that the paper has magnified the incident out of all proportion. The students' love was beyond words. They even gave me a purse of Rs. 700. It is the same in the case of U.P.

Ansari came and saw me on Sunday. [His] health is a little better. [He] wished to see Vithalbhai, but could not. During the last days he had become very restless. Ansari had nothing in particular to say. He had come only to pay a formal visit. He has gone to see some patients in princely families. He left the same evening. I was observing silence then, though not when he arrived. So far I have experienced no difficulty in the tour. It is now time for my meal and then to get into a car. So I must stop here today. Ba and Swami left Wardha yesterday. Ba will go to Ahmedabad *via* Akola. Manu has gone to

[1] Held on November 9, 1933

Rajkot where Rami's[1] daughter is ill. Always write to me at the Wardha address.

Blessings to both from
BAPU

[From Gujarati]
Bapuna Patro–2: Sardar Vallabhbhaine, pp. 46-7

247. LETTER TO MANIBEHN PATEL

CHANDA,
November 14, 1933

CHI. MANI,

I got your long letter. You did well to speak out your mind. You would only harm yourself if you hide your thoughts from me. After a man's death, we must not remember his shortcomings, but should remember only his virtues. My absence had nothing to do with his actions. It is not that I fail to appreciate his virtues. I did not go there because I could not have taken part in anything.[2] I feel that at present I should be either in Yeravda or among Harijans. When I say that I am out of prison only for the sake of Harijans, I do so not only for the benefit of the Government or the world but because that is how I really feel in my heart. I simply cannot take part in any other activity. People also seem to have understood this. I could not have tolerated the restrictions imposed by the Government and would not have been able to have things according to my own way. I would not have been able to advise you or Dahyabhai. And so I bore the attacks in silence. Apart from this, there is another thing, too, in my life which you should know. Rasik[3] was on his death-bed and he even wished that I should be by his bedside. But I did not go to Delhi, Ba did. Rasik died. I did not shed a single tear. I was taking my meals when I received the wire. I finished my meal and resumed my work. There have been many such incidents in my life. I have formed certain views about death and they are becoming stronger as the years pass. I do not look upon death as a

[1] Rami Kunverji Parekh, daughter of Harilal Gandhi

[2] The addressee had asked why Gandhiji did not attend Vithalbhai Patel's funeral.

[3] Harilal Gandhi's son who died on February 8, 1929; *vide* Vol. XXXIX, p. 431.

calamity. Marriage may be that, death never is. Does this set your doubt at rest? If not, ask me again.

You have given a good description of the events there. It was very painful. We should understand the meaning of people's love. That love is not of the individual but of the virtues which they want to see in, and, therefore, attribute to him. Their love, therefore, is a pure thing. It is a sign of the popular awakening and an eye-opener for the world. Nobody can doubt that Vithalbhai was a lover of freedom.

Now about Ba. If I had had time, I would have explained the point more clearly in that letter.[1] Ba's mind has weakened. She wants and yet does not want to court arrest. Deep down in her heart she knows that it is her duty to do so, and cannot forsake that duty, but she does not like to go as I am out. I have not put any pressure. I have left her free to do as she wishes. What I wanted to say was that you should urge her and strengthen her resolution to do her duty, for she believes in you and loves you. Anything I might say is likely to be regarded as an order and might kill her individuality. I, therefore, tell her nothing. But even my silence is interpreted by Ba to mean that I want her to go.

I understand [what you say] about your teeth and legs. Follow the doctor's advice. It is very necessary to wait for a while, you need not insist on immediate action.

I am writing to Dahyabhai.

Blessings from
BAPU

[PS.]

Write at Wardha only.

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro–4: Manibehn Patelne, pp. 113-4

[1] *Vide* p. 201.

248. LETTER TO DAHYABHAI PATEL

CHANDA,
November 14, 1933

CHI. DAHYABHAI,

I understand your feeling and disappointment. You can know my feelings and mind from my letter to Manibehn.[1] What can I do when I am helpless? Just as a soldier deprived of his sword is no good, so am I without civil disobedience. Moreover my whole life has been pledged. My pledge is either I would be in jail or would be immersed in Harijan work. I cannot even think of any other activity. The faults of Vithalbhai have departed with him. He had many good qualities and it is the memory of these that we have to treasure. You are perhaps not aware that I wrote a letter to him and he sent me an affectionate reply. My personal relations with him were never strained. Differences of opinion never affect personal relations. There is no need to explain all this to you. But Manibehn writes that you and other nephews too are a little hurt; so I am offering this explanation to you. I am very much perturbed as Vallabhbhai is in jail. If he were out I would have left it to him to remove all family misunderstandings. Because he is in jail the task of removing such misunderstandings falls on me all the more heavily. Do not hesitate to write to me frankly if you feel that this explanation is not adequate.

Blessings from
BAPU

SHRI DAHYABHAI VALLABHBHAI PATEL
RAMNIVAS
PAREKH STREET
BOMBAY 4

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro–4: Manibehn Patelne, p. 155

[1] *Vide* the preceding item.

249. LETTER TO RUKMINIDEVI BAZAJ

November 14, 1933

CHI. RUKMINI,

I had your letter. Keep the rule. I have started writing letters today at three in the morning immediately after rising. These days I get up every day at three and write as many letters as I can in one hour. We are leaving for Saoli today at six. I shall be accompanied in the car up to Saoli by Janakibehn and the other grown-ups. Saoli is a big centre of khadi manufacture, where khadi work is carried on on our behalf. I hope all of you are well. I hear from your father-in-law[1] occasionally. Keshu is quite happy.

Blessings to you both from
BAPU

[PS.]

Write always at Wardha.

From Gujarati: C.W. 9702. Courtesy: Benarsilal Bazaj

250. TALK TO KHADI WORKERS, SAOLI

November 14, 1933

Gandhiji exhorted them to introduce improvements in their implements which would give them an increased output and a consequent increase in wages.[2] He said:

Even then if you do not give up your bad habits, an increase in wages would not add to your happiness, for you will squander away what you will get. What is necessary then, above all, is for you to purify your life, give up evil habits, and you will add not only to your resources but also to your well-being.

Harijan, 24-11-1933

[1] Rameshwarlal Bazaj

[2] Some of the women workers had complained of scanty wages.

251. LETTER TO MATHURADAS TRIKUMJI

CHANDA,
November 15, 1933

I should advise you not to put too much strain on your body. It was not at all necessary for you to have run after the bier all the way.[1] It is not an absolute moral duty to do so. I knew that my absence would be misunderstood, but why should I forsake my dharma for fear that others might not understand it? If I can live mentally outside jail, it can be only for Harijan work. That being so, I can do nothing unconnected with such work. Unable to offer civil disobedience, I am like a bird who has lost its wings. I would not have been able to endure some of the things which happened there. Looking at the matter even from that point of view, therefore, I couldn't have come. Moreover, the date for the commencement of the Harijan tour had already been fixed. I didn't go to see Motilalji's widow. I haven't gone to see Rami's daughter, who is on her death-bed. Similarly, I am not going to visit Brijkishan, who is as dear to me as a son and who too is on his death-bed. . . .[2] You should write to him. Perhaps a wire may be necessary. . . .[3] I did not go to see Rasik when he was on his death-bed. I didn't go even after he died. But I needn't tell you all this. I have given a few instances thinking that perhaps you do not know about this aspect of my life. In fact, even you need not reply to such charges against me. Those who have failed to understand me till now will not be convinced by arguments. We must trust to the effect which my life as a whole may produce. Our deeds will have their effect sooner or later. No arguments can prevent them.

Your not coming did not please me. I had thought that you would suddenly turn up on Sunday without previous intimation. It seems that there will be no meeting[4]. If it is held, it will be in Delhi on December 14. Ansari wants it to be on that day. If so, you should attend. . . .[5]

[1] The addressee had attended Vithalbhai Patel's funeral.
[2] & [3] Omissions as in the source
[4] Of the A.I.C.C.
[5] Omission as in the source

Do your best regarding Utkal. The article[1] in *Harijan* seems to have brought some money. You need not worry about this problem. There is no necessity at all for you to strain your health. As one should avoid indolence, so also should one avoid excessive work. The verse समत्वं योग उच्यते, etc.,[2] is ever fresh in my mind. The *Gita* is like a living mother to me, like the *Kamadhenu*[3]. There is no exaggeration at all in this statement.

[From Gujarati]

Bapuni Prasadi, pp.139-40

252. LETTER TO JAMNALAL BAJAJ

November 15, 1933

CHI. JAMNALAL,

Shri Harkare saw me about a memorial to Salpekarji. If a fund, to be called Salpekar Smarak Harijan Seva Nidhi, is started and contributions are collected for it, I have agreed that my name may be used for that purpose. But I have told him that this may be done only if you approve of the plan and agree to help. A sum of not less than Rs. 5,000 should be collected for this fund, and it may be given to me in Chindwara in the form of a purse. A small committee may be formed for the purpose and the money may be spent for Harijan uplift in consultation with me. If you approve of this plan, help and guide Shri Harkare accordingly.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat f the Gujarati: G.N. 2926

[1] *Vide* "The Cry rissa", pp. 174-6.
[2] Even-mindedness is yoga. *Bhagavad Gita*, II. 48
[3] The cow of Hindu mythology which yielded all desires

253. SPEECH AT PUBLIC MEETING, WUN

November 15, 1933

I tell you, if you do not know already, that my friendship with Bapuji Aney has grown with years. I can give you many reminiscences of his sweet manners and brevity of speech, his resourcefulness and industry. I cannot conceal from you my grief at his enforced absence[1] from our midst today.

I was not prepared to hear this[2] from you, I want an unsoiled cowrie from you, which means, I want you to sacrifice a little of your comforts to spare money for the Harijans. I do not think any one of you denied yourself, out of sympathy with the flood-stricken people, a single meal or a single comfort. If that be true, it does not behove you to plead inability when asked to contribute to this cause, which is one of penance and purification for us, caste Hindus.

Harijan, 24-11-1933

254. SPEECH AT PUBLIC MEETING, YEOTMAL

November 15, 1933

This song[3] conveys a message of peace and fearlessness. How can we retain untouchability consistently with our prayer to be at peace with the whole world? If we want to be just to the whole world we have to be just to the Harijans.

Ever since I set foot on the soil of Berar, the name of Bapuji Aney is reverberating in my ears. After years of comradeship a friendship has grown between us, the measure of which I cannot describe to you adequately. I expect to hear his name being echoed in every nook and corner of Berar.

Harijan, 24-11-1933

[1] M. S. Aney was in prison.

[2] The people of Wun had excused themselves from giving a purse on account of the flood havoc.

[3] The flag song

255. LETTER TO AGATHA HARRISON

AMRAOTI,
(AS AT WARDHA)
November 16, 1933

MY DEAR AGATHA,

I had your long letter.

I see that you are ever thinking of Andrews as a good mother would think of her son, looking after him and anticipating his wants and protecting him from all harm. You are quite right in saying that without some such care his anxiety complex overtakes him and he then suffers, and his work with him. Nevertheless, if you feel that for more efficient work you should come to India for a month or two, you should not hesitate. In this, both he and I agreed, but he is there on the spot and you will do what you think proper after consultation with him and other friends. Not that at the present moment any substantial work can be done. Sir Samuel Hoare has made up his mind about everything. He believes in his 'mission'. He almost thinks that we are incapable of looking after our own affairs or even knowing what is good for us. He will not let us make mistakes. The immediate needs of the Britishers blind him to the realities. I feel that, in these circumstances, friends over there can do very little beyond watching, waiting and praying. We must look after ourselves, and if we succeed in demonstrably helping ourselves, you over there will be able to do substantial work.

Hijli affair seems to have been satisfactorily settled. I suppose I am right in presuming that my very simple letter to the Governor of Bengal had its effect.

It may be said that the funeral ceremony over the remains of Vithalbhai Patel passed off fairly well. So far as the public were concerned they demonstrated in an unmistakable manner what they stood for. The procession is described in Anglo-Indian papers to have been at least a mile long. The whole of Bombay turned out to do honour to the memory of the deceased. They identified themselves with the cause for which he stood, viz., India's unadulterated Independence, not of association with Britain but undoubtedly of the slightest control. That the people are today helpless and unable to help themselves does not affect

their mentality. They know what they want and they seize every occasion that offers to them to let the world know their mind.

I wish you would succeed in bringing Subhas Bose to England.

I am dictating this during the few minutes that I have at my disposal before motoring away to the next destination. I know you had last week an accurate letter from Chandrashankar Shukla. I am not going to put the strain on him by sending you another descriptive letter. The same demonstrations and enthusiasm continue unabated. I do feel that untouchability is going much more swiftly than many may imagine. No less than 1,50,000 people must have taken part in the numerous meetings and demonstrations. If they did not want to endorse the movement, one would think that they could not possibly have attended in such large numbers. They know that at the present moment I am touring solely in regard to untouchability, and that no political mission is mixed up with it, and yet they attend, and, in spite of the very hard times we are going through, they give their pices and their rupees. It is, therefore, sad to think that the Anglo-Indian papers are seeking to minimize the importance of the tour and even seeking to discredit it. I wonder if they had telegraphed to you the so-called egg-throwing incident at Nagpur and the preparations for boycott in the U.P. I enclose cuttings about the incident and my very brief reply. Of course, the sanatanists' opposition is undoubtedly there. But, up till now I have not noticed any support being given to them by the public at large. The sanatanists would not have hesitated to damage the movement if they had any public support worth the name. More I have not the time to say. But you must read *Harijan* as part of my weekly letter. Distribute it as much as you like, and if you want more copies you can have them for the asking. And you may take it that it will hide nothing of the opposition to the movement. I have refrained from dealing with the egg-throwing question and the opposition in the U.P., in the pages of the *Harijan*, first, because I have dealt with the two things in the public press, and secondly, because they have no bearing on the movement. They have a political bearing in the sense that the Anglo-Indian newspapers are resorting to unscrupulous tactics. But I do not want to deal with such things in the pages of the *Harijan*. I want it to be free from political controversy even though just now I am out of prison. Immediately I am inside prison walls I may not take notice of any politics even though they may have profound influence upon the Harijan movement. And I am trying as much

as it is humanly possible to act as if I was a prisoner. If, however, you find any omissions in the *Harijan* or my letters, you will not hesitate to draw my attention to such omission.

I take it that you will share this letter with the friends who, you think, should see it.

Yours sincerely,
BAPU

From a photostat: G.N. 1474

256. LETTER TO EFY ARISTARCHI

AMRAOTI,
November 16, 1933

MY DEAR EFY,

I have your letter with the very beautiful card which you want me to keep in my copy of the *Bhagavad Gita*. I am not going to carry out your wish literally, for, that will defeat it. I do not read from the *Gita* every day. I listen to its reading in the morning. And since your idea, I take it, is that I should have the picture daily as a book-mark I propose to keep it in the book which I may be reading for the time being and transfer it from book to book.

I see that you are having Gujarati lessons, probably from Manu, for, you have addressed your name in Gujarati.

I am glad that you are coming in close touch with Manu and Elizabeth. You ask me what I wish about this love affair. I regard both as very lovable, very sincere and very earnest, but what I fear is that they do not measure the full consequences of the proposed marriage. I can thoroughly appreciate their viewpoint. For them it is enough that they love each other. But I have always held that whilst young people should first make their choice, its finality should be dependent upon the approval and blessings of the elders. I have seen young love so often disappointed in after years. However deliberate the choice, somehow or other later years proved the choice to have been ill made. In this case I see grave danger ahead. The most fatal objection, however, that I can see to this proposed match is that Elizabeth desires, and from her own standpoint perhaps naturally so, that the progeny should be brought up in the Roman Catholic faith. I do not mind it at all. But, even though Manu may have no objection, his parents and his people whom he loves dearly will never be

able to reconcile themselves to their grandchildren being brought up in a faith other than their own.

Then there is the question of the whole Hindu culture. I see, even at the present moment, a conflict going on between Hindu culture and the Christianity of Indians; the latter are being torn between two almost opposite attractions. Somehow or other, Christianity has become synonymous with Western culture. Perhaps rightly so, for, the religion of the Western people is predominantly Christianity and therefore Western culture may be fittingly described as Christian culture as Indian culture would certainly be described as Hindu culture. The progeny of Elizabeth must be brought up in entirely different surroundings unless Manu decides to tear himself away from his own surroundings and lives an exclusive life or decides to settle down in the West. I think that, spiritually considered, Elizabeth herself should not be a party to the possibility of Manu having to tear himself away.

Then there is the question of Elizabeth herself. She would be hard put to it to accommodate herself to Indian surroundings. Her constitution may be undermined or she would have to live a life out of all correspondence to her surroundings. There is ample justification for Europeans saying that they cannot possibly exist in India without incurring expenses out of all proportion to the Indian average. It is difficult enough even for Mira, in spite of her tremendous love for India, in spite of her iron will, to bend herself to the Indian simplicity, and Mira is the general average. But even she has to be protected against herself and compel[led] to give herself facilities which her associates are not given. She would have become bed-ridden long ago if I had not laid down the law from the very first and I know that she has extraordinarily accommodated herself to the Indian life. But, even she would have failed completely if she had married an Indian and made the futile attempt of bringing up her children after the Indian style. Nobody who has not lived in India like Indians can possibly have a conception of what I am writing. India is the poorest country in the world. And it is a tremendous job for a Western girl to come to India and marry an Indian with a fixed determination of living the essentially Indian life. I do not recall a single Indian who has taken a European girl for his wife living the life of the average Indian. He simply cannot do it if he will do justice to his wife. And I myself much less . . .[1] reconciled to ourselves to Manu

[1] Some words are illegible.

having lower his idea for the sake of Elizabeth.[1] It is for reasons such as this that I have cried out for celibacy for those who dedicate themselves completely to God, i.e., to the service of God's creation. There is no difficulty in my treating Mira as my daughter or you, but, imagine me having any European girl as daughter-in-law. I should be frightened. I could not shoulder the burden, because I could not reconcile myself to Devdas, for instance, having to tear himself away from his natural surroundings. I feel it to be premature for Indians to contract marriage relations with Europeans. When India has improved her conditions or when Europeans have boys and girls who have become inured to uttermost simplicity and have become domiciled in India I can look forward with happiness to Indo-European marriages.

Now, I think, I have given you a long enough letter and ample matter for thought. You know, at least somewhat, what I would wish, but I do not, in any shape or form, expect you to give effect to my wish, if what I have said does not appeal to you. And, if you think otherwise about the future of Manu and Elizabeth, you will not hesitate to tell me so. Whilst I deeply appreciate your losing yourself in me I would not be guilty of enslaving your reason or your heart. Imperfect as I am, I would not have you to become a partner in my errors. You must, therefore, exercise your full judgment in everything you do in association with me. My love for you will be none the less for your differing with me when you feel the need for difference in thought, speech or action.

I have not put before you one more thing that I have stated in my letter to Elizabeth. I would simply state the proposition without arguing it.

I believe that, when husband and wife profess a different faith, the progeny should be brought up in the faith of the husband. There are, to me, sound religious and philosophic reasons for this proposition. If this proposition does not appear to be sound, you should ask Elizabeth to show you my letter to her.

I am working just now under tremendous strain. I get very little time for carrying on correspondence. This letter too, I am dictating under trying circumstances. I would, therefore, like you, if you think it wise, to share this letter with Elizabeth as also Manu. But, if you think it wise not [to] do so, please tell both

[1] Perhaps the sentence should read: And I [am] myself much less [inclined to] reconcile ourselves to Manu having [to] lower his ideal for the sake of Elizabeth.

of them that I have their joint letter as also Elizabeth's previous letter, both of which I appreciate and about which I have written to you.

I hope you received my letter wherein the £15 sent by you were acknowledged. I cannot warn you too often against unduly denying yourself.

Love.

BAPU

PRINCESS EFY ARISTARCHI
HOTEL SCHOTZKY
FREIBURG 1-B
(GERMANY)

From a facsimile in *Mahatma*, Vol. III, facing p. 344

257. LETTER TO MANU GANDHI

November 16, 1933

CHI. MANUDI,

I got your two letters together today. You did quite right in going there. Now help Kusum to get all right. I suppose you will return to Wardha after she has recovered. Bali[1] also felt happy. I am not writing to her separately. Write to me regularly at Wardha.

Blessings from
BAPU

SMT. BALIBEHN
C/O VORA HARIDAS VAKHATCHAND
BEHIND HIGH SCHOOL
RAJKOT

From a copy of the Gujarati: C.W. 1662. Courtesy: Manubehn S. Mashruwala

[1] Balibehn M. Adalaja, Harilal Gandhi's wife's sister

258. SPEECH AT HANUMAN VYAYAMSHALA, AMRAOTI

November 16, 1933

This vast gathering must have seen that there is no God-made distinction between caste Hindus and Harijans.[1] The distinction is purely man-made, and is an offence in the eyes of God. If the Harijans are given full opportunities for advancement, they will certainly equal, if they will not beat, others in many a field of life. The sight we have witnessed this evening must be an eye-opener to us and must inspire us to purge our hearts of the taint of untouchability.

Harijan, 24-11-1933

259. SPEECH AT PUBLIC MEETING, AMRAOTI

November 16, 1933

I have visited many places throughout the length and breadth of this country and such big meetings are to me the manifestations of the grace of God. I believe that with God's favour only can we conduct such huge assemblies. With His grace also I have taken up the Harijan work. It is a religious work and should therefore be done with truth, peace and sacrifice. It could not be done otherwise. If we want to expiate for the injustice done to the Harijans and if we want to atone for the wrongs we, the *savarna* Hindus, are still doing them, we must treat them as we treat other *savarna* Hindus. I would like to tell you all that, unless we behave with them on equal terms, there is no chance of our improvement also. I visited the Harijan quarters with the help of Dr. Patwardhan, and have also seen other work here, and have now heard the address read out to me by the local Municipal Committee. If the Municipality of this place could not do anything in this matter, it is not to be blamed. I have seen many other municipal committees and the conditions are just the same all over. But I must say that now even the Western scientists after their research have come to the conclusion that if we leave

[1] About a hundred Harijan boys had displayed their skill in physical drill before the gathering to the accompaniment of a band.

out any particular section of our society out of our fold, we are sure to go down economically. After these 25 years of observations, my belief is being strengthened that wealth should always go hand in hand with religion. There should be harmony between religion and wealth. I have come to realize from my Harijan work that one who tries for wealth in accordance with religion gets both. I believe it to be the duty of every *savarna* Hindu that he should try to take up the Harijan into his fold. If we do our duty towards the Harijans, all of us, Hindus, Moslems, Parsis, Christians, will live peacefully. To my mind there is no better way to unity of these people than Harijan work. Now I must tell you what every one of you can do in this respect. The Harijan movement is a great *yajna* and each of you can put his little bit in it. Those who have money can give it for this cause. Those who have the leisure and intelligence to spare can teach the Harijan boys and give them lessons in personal hygiene and cleanliness. The Congressmen are doing this work at present. But I want that non-Congressmen also should undertake this work. It is the religious duty of every one of you to do this work.

I do not value politics as much as I value this work. Politics is nothing to me. It is my belief that if we do this work with religious fervour everything will be obtained. I am not travelling with any other intention in this work. And when I see people assemble in such large numbers to hear me, I hope they will stand by me in this work. In July last the Harijan Sevak Sangh was started and some of you must have taken the vow to wipe out this curse of untouchability. It is the birthright of the Harijans to make use of public institutions and to enter into the temples. But as long as there is a single soul boycotted as being a Harijan, I shall not regard untouchability as being wiped out totally. It is up to you, therefore, to change your hearts and consider the Harijans as your brethren.

The Harijan Sevak Sangh is composed of people of different schools of thought but they can do this work together. The workers in this field should not aspire after any kind of honour or title. They should not have the slightest tinge of personal interest or selfish motive. This work should also be free from any sort of political colour. There is no doubt that it will have some political meaning but I do not value political things as much as this. The Harijan work is for the purification of the Hindu religion. I have great hopes in this matter. I have always been an optimist and my optimism in this case is increasing every day.

But even if I fail it remains my duty to continue this work. Very few sincere workers have so far come forward. I, therefore, pray to God that He should give you all the necessary strength and guidance to do your duty in this respect.[1]

I must remind you of the pledge given last year in your name. You will remember that a meeting of representatives of Hindus was held in Bombay in September last year, Pandit Malaviyaji being in the chair. Among other things they resolved that untouchability, being a blot on the Hindu religion, had to be removed and that Harijans were entitled to the same public utilities, and in the same manner, as caste Hindus. There was in that resolution a special reference to Hindu temples, and legislation was contemplated if it was found to be necessary for attaining the end. It is, therefore, the bounden duty of every caste Hindu to fulfil the pledge by throwing open to the Harijans temples, wells and other institutions precisely on the same terms as they are open to caste Hindus.

We are the cause of the degradation to which the Harijans are reduced. We must spend money if the wrong is to be redressed. He who will give to the cause will gain. We may not be satisfied, therefore, with giving out of superfluous cash, we have to give even if we have to stint ourselves. Some of us will have to give our all for Harijan service.

It gladdens me to find both Congressmen and non-Congressmen working together in this movement. Since questions are being asked as to how far Congressmen can join this movement, I would like to reiterate what I have said before. The Congress adopted removal of untouchability as an integral part of its programme in 1920. It is, therefore, the duty of every Hindu Congressman to fight untouchability and help Harijans in every way open to him. But, if the movement were confined to Congressmen alone, it could not make the headway we all desire. Every *savarna* Hindu has to do his bit in the movement. But whilst every Congress member is expected to fight the evil, he or she is not expected officially to join the Harijan Seva Sangh. If they are active civil resisters, they ought not to hold office in these organizations. And no Congressman who believes in and wants to offer civil resistance need in any way feel constrained to suspend or give it up altogether. The case is wholly different with those who feel the call to give up civil resistance for the sake of Harijan service or who have lost faith in the former.

[1] The following, except the last paragraph, is from *Harijan*, 1-12-1933.

In this movement of self-purification as in satyagraha there is no room for camouflage.

Harijans have complained that some self-seekers have crept into the movement. In a purely religious movement there is no room for such people. Only those can or should take office who have the spirit of service in them.

Some of the ladies of this place have offered me ornaments and the little children have given me a little silver casket which I wish to put for auction. I shall accept money from you all, be it even a cowrie but it should be given with a pure heart. I assure you that it will make you happy and will be helpful to the Harijans.

Hitavada, 23-11-1933, and *Harijan*, 1-12-1933

260. LETTER TO KIKABHAI L. WAGHELA[1]

[Before *November 17, 1933*][2]

The schools I open are not meant solely for Harijans and I certainly do not open schools which are not open to Harijans. What you state about enquiries into the condition of Harijans employed by municipalities will not be overlooked by me.

The Hindu, 18-11-1933

261. INTERVIEW TO ASSOCIATED PRESS

AKOLA,
[On or before *November 17, 1933*][3]

Gandhiji, interviewed by the Associated Press, regarding a private report from America that he was going to New York in the spring season, denied having received any invitation to this effect.

He added that he had only recently declared to a Press correspondent his utter inability to go to America or elsewhere, stating that he would not depart from his vow of devoting his energy solely to the Harijan cause up to the end of next July.

The Bombay Chronicle, 18-11-1933

[1] The addressee, a Harijan leader, had requested Gandhiji not to open separate schools for Harijan children.

[2] This appeared under the date-line "Ahmedabad, November 17".

[3] The report appeared under the date-line "Akola, November 17".

262. PICE PER DAY

Sjt. Harakhchand, writing on 26th October, says:[1]

Here the reader should stretch his imagination and ask himself what it must mean when people gladly walk miles to secure doles giving them less than one pice worth of rice per day and then search his heart as to whether he can honestly plead hard times when he is called upon to give a donation towards partially feeding the hungry skeletons of Orissa. He must not expect a collector to go to him before he will part with his rupee or whatever sum he can give. He should send his money order without delay. Or he will, to save commission, combine with his neighbours so as to send the maximum amount covered by the minimum commission.

Harijan, 17-11-1933

263. ADMIRABLE

The arrangements made by Dr. Khare and his Harijan Committee for the programme last week were admirable. It could not have been got through even as it was, had not a very large number of willing and able companions helped Dr. Khare who never spared himself or them during those trying and strenuous days, although he has chronic heart trouble. I understand that the heavy expenditure involved in having lofty electric lights and the solid platform at the huge mass meeting was met from voluntary contributions and was in no way a tax upon the purses presented. My host's house was for the time being turned into a dharmashala and Sjts. Tikekar Brothers spared no pains or expenses in making happy and comfortable our large company and others who had come for numerous functions. All Congessmen and non-Congressmen seemed to me to have acted in perfect co-operation for making the visit to Nagpur and the surrounding places the success it undoubtedly was. I tender my congratulations to Dr. Khare and his colleagues for the efforts they unstintingly put

[1] The letter is not reproduced here. The correspondent, describing the magnitude of the relief work in Orissa, had stressed the urgent need of funds. *Vide* also "A Pice Per Head", p. 217.

forth on the occasion. The great cause of purification deserved all the pains and vigilance given to it.

Harijan, 17-11-1933

264. *THE UTILIZATION OF DONATIONS*

Workers desire further elucidation than I have already given in these columns as to the mode of using the donations that are being received during the Harijan tour. I have conferred with Thakkar Bapa on the point and I can announce definitely that not less than 75 per cent will be used for Harijan service in the places where they are received, provided that a satisfactory budget is presented and the Central Board approves of it. Indeed, even the full amount will be surrendered wherever it is found necessary to do so. The only thing, therefore, to do is for workers in each centre to prepare businesslike schemes and produce honest and industrious persons for the due execution of the schemes, and the money will be forthwith coming as soon as needed. There is no desire to lock up the donations or to deflect them without cause from the places where they are collected. It is intended to keep a certain portion for the Central Board, but there, too, not for overhead charges, but for constructive work directly handled by it.

Harijan, 17-11-1933

265. *SPEECH AT ANJUMAN MUFID-UL-ISLAM, KHAMGAON*

November 17, 1933

When I heard that your Anjuman had invited me, I was very glad. I am very thankful to you for your kind address and for the purse you presented to me for Harijan work. I was very glad to read the contents of your address. You very rightly state that so long as untouchability remains there is no hope for Hinduism. I have been with the Mussalmans all my life. The great virtue which I find in Islam is that it teaches equality and brotherhood of man, be he king or slave. Most of you must be *Hafiz* and must have read the Koran. I have also tried to study and learn all the best in it.

What you have said about Hindu-Muslim unity has appealed to me most. I find that there are too many misunderstandings. Still, Hindus and Muslims cannot remain apart like this. After

all how long will this go on? I have found, however, that at present I have failed to bring unity but I surely see success in this failure. It should also be remembered that unity does not mean joining powers to crush someone else. If this is our idea of unity, we had better remain as we are. At present I am only concentrating on Harijan work and have left this question for a time.

I can quite understand your anxiety to retain your culture. You do not seem to believe in common educational institutions which, in your opinion, are calculated to lead you astray from your religious and cultural wealth. I look on this question of sectarian education differently. Common schools or communal schools do not matter with me. What is the good of the common schools when prejudices create differences of heart? What harm is there in communal schools when there is purity of heart for all? So you will see that communal schools or common schools are of little importance. Purity of heart, trust in each other and love for others are things more important than the question of sectarian education.

I really did not expect a purse from you. More than this, I need your blessings to give me strength to fight untouchability. I need your help to rid India of a great curse. It is our common cause, not for India alone but for the whole world. It is the service of humanity. I am very thankful to you for your kind address and the purse presented to me.

The Hindustan Times, 25-11-1933

266. SPEECH AT PUBLIC MEETING, KHAMGAON

November 17, 1933

I am grateful to you for the address you have presented and also for the purse and donations. I thank the association of the Muslims for their purse. During my visit to the Chokhamela[1] Harijan Boarding, the brothers gave me cash and the sisters rings. I am thankful for these gifts as well. I appreciate the good work you have done in Khamgaon and its neighbourhood for removing untouchability.

This evening, Thakkar Bapa has thrown open Udasiji's[2] Siva temple to the Harijans in Lasoor. He has performed this sacred

[1] A Harijan saint of Maharashtra
[2] Vishnudas Udasi

task for the sake of our Harijan brethren. I am told no Harijan was present on the occasion. The Harijans are still suspicious because of the treatment we have meted out to them. It is the duty of the Hindus, or of those who consider themselves caste Hindus, to do justice to them, and atone for the atrocities they have heaped on the Harijans in the past, and give up the ignorant belief prevalent today that the temples are meant for caste Hindus alone. Udasiji has done his duty by this act. Whether the Harijans come or not, we should discharge our duty towards them with love and the result is bound to be good. When the Harijans are convinced that our invitation is prompted by love, they will come by themselves.

Here I wish to say one thing, that the law applicable to Hindus applies to Harijans as well. Rules of public conduct and should be applicable to all alike. Harijans should follow the rules for visiting public institutions. They should keep their bodies clothes clean and follow the rules of personal cleanliness. Harijans who eat carrion have no right to enter temples. Having travelled widely, and after studying history, I have found that those who eat carrion are despised everywhere. There is no doubt that those who are godfearing and in whom wisdom and purity have dawned can give it up. Likewise, I request them to give up drinking. I know that it can be argued that there are many among caste Hindus who take alcohol; but it is not right to follow them in their vices. He who takes alcohol loses his humanity. He even forgets the difference between mother, sister, daughter and wife. Although by birth I am a caste Hindu, by choice I am a Harijan. Therefore, from this point of view, considering myself a Harijan, I implore them to give up this vice. I know that alcohol is used even in their rituals. This is what some pseudo-pundits have taught them and they have believed it. There is not an iota of religion in this; it certainly is irreligious. Therefore I beg of you to give up this vice which makes beast of man. In fact, it is this thing which is untouchable. In the same way, Mahars, Chamars, Bhangis and others should do away with the distinctions amongst themselves. This is the Harijans' share of duty in this work of self-purification.

Now, I wish to say something to the caste Hindus. I also want to say what I conclude from this vast congregation that has gathered here to hear my speech. Ever since I returned to India, I do exactly as my conscience dictates. Let no one imagine that I do one thing but have something else in my mind. I claim to believe in God, whether you call him Khuda, Allah, or

Ishwar. I stand in awe before Him. He is witness to all my work. I have also taken a vow with Him as my witness that I shall do Harijan service in a truly religious spirit. There are many things I can do, but if I did them it would be my downfall. Out of the prison I wish to do only one thing; otherwise my life is false. I consider myself a layman, but layman or learned, it is the duty of everyone to follow his dharma. I consider this work a religious duty. Whatever I have learnt from my parents and teachers and from my own experience, all this I would like to present before you. I have had the reward of whatever service I have rendered before. God alone can reward my service. At the moment, I wish to work only for the removal of untouchability. If you like my views you can come and if you do not like them you can avoid me. During these days, I have felt your affection and therefore I shall bear it even if you abuse me today and, if you beat me I shall bear that also and shall pray to God to forgive you. But if you do not agree with my views, courtesy demands that you should avoid coming here. I however see that you come here, give money and jewellery gladly; I therefore take it that you are with me. Are you paying my fees for the work I have already done? I do not require fees. God gives me my reward. But when you come here in such large numbers and help me with money, etc., I conclude that you are with me in whatever task I have undertaken now; that is, this has become the sanatan dharma today. I have met a hundred and fifty thousand people today. Are they all reformers? No. They are sanatanists and they are doing this work today. If today you do not voluntarily take part in the removal of untouchability, tomorrow you will have to do it against your will. When popular rule is established, do you think the Harijans can be prevented from entering schools or excluded from other rights? There was a time when people would not travel along with them in trains; why do they do it now? In the same way, I ask the mill-owners whether they do not touch the untouchables? They do, but only for pecuniary gain. There is no virtue in this. I say what you are obliged to do for pecuniary gain, could you not do the same out of your own free will and because it is religious?

In the address presented to me on behalf of the Municipality, it is stated that we should give up the move to have the law regarding temple-entry enacted, because many people think that legal interference is undesirable in religious matters. I wish to tell them that the Harijans have as much right to go to the temples for worship as we have. But the draft of the Bill which

has been presented has no element of force at all. On the other hand it seeks to remove the element of coercion which exists in the law as it is today. I myself do not like interference by law in religious matters but how do these Bills interfere with religion? If any lawyer can prove this, I shall give it up; but I know for certain that this is not the case. After all, I was myself a legal practitioner once upon a time. Lawyers contend that, today even if the public wish to throw open a temple to the Harijans and the majority of the trustees also agrees to it, the temple cannot be thrown open even if a single trustee raises objection. The law does not allow freedom for independent decision, and so it does amount to coercion. The aim of this Bill is to remove this coercion. Whatever fault there is in the law can only be removed by law; there is no other way. It would have been interference with religion if by law all temples were to be thrown open; but there is no such provision in the Bill. There is obviously no compulsion in this. The temples can be thrown open only when the trustees or the public wish to do so. If they do not, there is no compulsion. At the Bombay Conference the Hindu leaders in the name of Hindu society took a pledge to secure for Harijans the right to have *darshan* of the idol. The legal obstruction to fulfilling that vow is to be removed with the help of law. That is all that this Bill means. In this there is no interference by law in religion. Now the members of the Municipality may ponder over my words.

When I visited the Harijans, they made several complaints and asked me whether I considered those who were doing Harijan work as true servants of the Harijans. I replied that I did not know about the local workers but all those who join in any movement cannot be said to be good and truthful. From their complaints I learnt that in Malkapur Harijans are not allowed the use of lavatories. If this is true, what a grave injustice it is that those who clean the lavatories cannot use them. Tomorrow if they stop cleaning them what can you do? Caste Hindus are not even so organized as to be able to take up mutual scavenging. No good can result from such behaviour. Similar complaints have been made about a place called Monar. All others can bathe in the water that flows there but Harijans are prohibited from doing so. They can bathe only in the unclean water drained after use by us for bathing. I do not know how far this is true, but if it is true it is a great disgrace. Such water is unfit even for animals. We wash even cattle with clean water. Are these Harijan brethren worse than animals? What is their fault? And even if they have been at fault, is this the treatment which should be meted out

to them? This has become our daily conduct. Irreligion we have made our religion. I shall also mention here the sad news from Rajputana that Harijans have to drink from the water stored for cattle. If this is our religion, it is doomed. Where there is so much hatred, so much antipathy, its doom is inevitable. If we say that this has the sanction of the Shastras and call this Hindu religion, I shall say that it is completely at variance with universal experience and it cannot last long. We may deceive ourselves, we may deceive others, too, but we cannot deceive God. In my concept of Hindu religion, as I have learnt it through experience and after deep study, there is no place at all for the present form of untouchability; and therefore I have taken the vow that even at the cost of my life, untouchability must go root and branch. Every single breath of mine all the twenty-four hours seems to say "Remove untouchability". You can serve Harijans only by becoming their servants. We have to become not the masters of Harijans, but their servants. I did not ask you to sit and dine with them; although as is my wont I accept from anywhere the type of food I allow myself if it is cooked clean by anybody. But I must tell you it was wrong to have sent away the Harijans in his contemptuous manner.

Kabir as well as other saints also have said that God lives with him who is forsaken by the world. Whom the world shuns God accepts. Such instances are to be found in all religions. I remember a story of the days of Hazrat Omer. When one of his commanders sent him 5,000 gold coins he started weeping at the sight. When his wife asked him why he was weeping, he replied, "Till today God was with me; today the world has come to me." So, you have disowned our Harijan brothers, but God is in truth with them alone. Therefore, you must remove the feeling of abhorrence that has crept into your hearts.

I have heard many people say, "As one sows in the previous birth, so one reaps in this birth." But it is not right to say so; it is *adharma*. There is pride in this statement. When our parents or wife or children are in trouble, do we say that is the fruit of their doings in a previous birth and neglect them? We then look after them and serve them. Then why this indifference towards others? I also believe in re-birth but it cannot be interpreted in this manner. This argument we can apply to ourselves only. To ignore others on finding them in trouble and to laugh at them and to tell them to "pay for the sins" of their previous birth is to turn God, whom we call the Ocean of mercy and justice, into a demon. I do not believe in

such previous births. Therefore, I beg you to think deeply over what I have said and, if you are convinced, give up this hatred and contempt and this feeling of high and low. If you are yourself convinced that this is the right thing to do but you are afraid of the public, well, the public is here [with you]. The truth is that the fear is in your own heart. If you give up this fear and hatred, the blot of untouchability will be removed from the Hindu religion and it will be for the good of us all.

Wherever I go, you give me money. Even to give money is to help in the work for Harijans but please do not if you have Rs. 10 throw away a couple of rupees thinking that this is one way among others of spending your money. No, even if you give one pice, give it whole-heartedly, give it with love denying yourself some necessities. He who gives a pice in this spirit will recover a thousandfold. Therefore considering it a sacred cause, please help it as much as you can.

[From Hindi]

Harijan Sevak, 8-12-1933

267. TELEGRAM TO SHRIKRISHNA CHANDIWALA

AKOLA,
November 18, 1933

SHRIKRISHNA[1]
KATRA KHUSHAL
DELHI

GOD BE THANKED. BLESSINGS. CHIKHALDA TILL MONDAY.

BAPU

From a photostat: G.N. 2401

[1] Brother of Brijkrishna Chandiwala, who had been seriously ill; *vid* pp. 115 and 229, and "Letter to Vallabhbhai Patel ", 4-12-1933, and "Letter to Kasturba Gandhi", 7-12-1933.

268. DISCUSSION WITH SWAMI LALNATH

November 18, 1933

[The Swami] said that he wanted Gandhiji to give up his tour or give up talking about the Bills and that, therefore, he was offering satyagraha and paying Gandhiji in his own coin.[1]

But this is not satyagraha but the negation of it. You want me either to get you arrested by the police or to take the car over your bodies. I would do neither. I would go on foot. Then perhaps you would hold my feet and make me your prisoner.

Yes, we would hold your feet and implore you to stop this tour.

That would surely be violence.

I cannot hide our intention from you. We want to be hurt by the police or by your volunteers. When this happens I know that you would give up the tour.

But I have told you that I shall certainly not summon the police and I shall not let the volunteers hurt you.

We must then continue to obstruct your passage.

You are very unreasonable. A satyagrahi must not be unreasonable. You want to provoke the public to violence. A satyagrahi never tempts anyone to do wrong. And how can you resort to such unbecoming behaviour, especially in religious matters? No earthly power can force me to act contrary to my convictions.

Then you should show us the better way.

I can certainly do that. You should go back to Benares and ask the Lord of the Universe to wean me from my error. You should fast as I did.

That we have not the ability to do.

Then I am very sorry. I do not like this unseemly business. You should go to your advisers and tell them to persuade me by argument or prayer. If they cannot do so, they should tolerate what I am doing, even as I tolerate their opposition. You can

[1] Swami Lalnath had at Dhamangaon and Amraoti made abortive attempts to hold up Gandhiji's car by lying prostrate before it.

see that I am simply putting the case against the evil before the thousands who come to listen to me.[1]

Harijan, 1-12-1933

269. SPEECH AT AKOLA

November 18, 1933

Before I come to our main subject today it is necessary to say something about the incident which took place while I was on my way here. Some persons who have come from Kashi are accompanying me. Amongst them is a Swami. They have a right to go with me in this way. My tour is continuing at such a rapid pace that they cannot follow me everywhere, they come where they can and lie down on the road in front of the car in which I travel. Volunteers remove them and the car continues its journey. The gentlemen do not abuse anyone; they do not indulge in violence. And, I trust, the volunteers do not beat them either. Today, too, they came to the gate. This pained me. I have always been pained at the absence of civility in those who come in the name of sanatan dharma. I did not like to continue my journey after having them removed. Hence, I sent for the Swami who is their leader and tried to reason with him.[2] It is because of this that I am late. I told him that it was not proper for those who claimed to safeguard religion to act in this manner. As the author of the modern technique of satyagraha I told him that their action did not amount to satyagraha, that this kind of action would tire them. If they caught hold of me, beat me up or abused me, I would not answer with obscene language, but would tolerate all that with a feeling of love. I would continue on foot, if they obstructed my car from going further. The Swami then replied that in that case they would cling to my feet and that I would have to walk over them. I replied that I would not do so; nor would I seek the assistance of the police. That would not do me credit. I would seek their help if I was afraid, but I have no fear whatever. In my life, I have been beaten up, but I never asked for police protection. Would I then stoop to do so in the evening of my life while working for dharma? Hence, I requested them to give me the way. I told them that they ought to have realized that in sanatan dharma, in Hinduism, there is

[1] *Vide* also the following item.
[2] *Vide* the preceding item.

freedom to express all kinds of opinions. Finally, the Swami went out and returned after consulting his colleagues and said that if, today, I took another route they would not obstruct me again, and their prestige too would be saved. I agreed to it and took another route.

The persons accompanying the Swami are young men full of enthusiasm. Someone has put the false notion into their heads that I am out to destroy sanatan dharma. They believe that what I say is contrary to the Shastras. They have a right to believe this. If I am mistaken, they should strive hard to convince me. That is the way of Hinduism, and it is a civilized way. But I am not happy because sanatan dharma is degraded by their uncivilized conduct. Hence I would humbly like to say to those who were opposing me in the name of sanatan dharma that they would be able to put a stop to my activities by appealing to my reason, by touching my heart and not through coercion or uncivilized conduct. I am one bound by a pledge. It is my dharma to abide by the pledge I have taken in the evening of my life. To you who come here to listen to me I pour out my heart. It is in your hands whether or not to act in accordance with what I say. God will know whether you put it into action or not; I shall not be here to find it out.

This morning, some persons who were protesting stood in my way with black flags. My dharma is not to be annoyed with them but to have a feeling of love towards them. They may greet me with black flags if they believe that what I am doing is improper. A servant of Harijans should be indifferent to praise or blame. This rule applies not only to me but to people all over the world who are engaged in public life. Anyone who does not follow it is sure to feel miserable. Why should I feel miserable at this? What difference does it make to me whether they wave black flags at me or white? My work alone will bring me praise or blame.

I learn that today the sanatanists burned my effigy. What does it matter to me even if crores of my effigies are burnt? It makes me unhappy because it involves some waste of money. But I stand to lose nothing on that account. If the people do not approve of what I say, if they disregard it, I can exert no pressure upon them. I can hardly force them to listen to me against their will. That is not my way of action; mine is a straightforward path. Even if the Government did not let them burn it,[1] those who wished to do so have as good as accomplished it. If

[1] Someone in the gathering said that the magistrate had not allowed the burning of the effigy.

I look at a woman with a lustful eye, I have as much as sinned against her. God is hardly going to forgive me because I could not accomplish my evil desire! He will argue that it was He who prevented the sinful act; I on my part had already committed it. Likewise, does it matter if the gentlemen could not actually burn the effigy? So far as they are concerned, they have as good as burnt it. Anyway it is all right if they burned it. Despite this, for the sake of dharma, I do wish they had not done so.

The sanatanists have brought out a leaflet alleging they were beaten up by the volunteers. If it is true, it was wrong on the part of the latter to have done so. I will not tolerate it. I do not approve of anyone wishing to protect me indulging in abusive language, rudeness or physical violence. Biyaniji[1] says the volunteers did nothing of the kind. I wish only to warn the volunteers. Perhaps my sanatanist brothers are irked by the large audiences at my meetings. Perhaps they may try to prevent the people from attending. They have every right to do so. Let no one obstruct the sanatanists, but we should try to persuade them politely. If they are not convinced, let them do as they wish. No one should inform the police. Let no one do anything to protect me. God has saved me in similar circumstances a number of times. So long as God wishes to take work from me He will keep my body healthy and safe. When my life-span has ended, no power on earth can keep me alive.

Entertain no doubt that the current movement is a test for Hindu society. The whole world is watching whether Hinduism rids itself of the evil of untouchability. If untouchability is wiped out of the hearts of Hindus, a feeling of brotherhood would come to be established between Hindus, Muslims, Christians and Jews. Untouchability has spread its innumerable tentacles far and wide. It has spread even to those whom we regard as belonging to other faiths. I do not regard this as dharma. Hatred or contempt has no place in Hinduism. Many *shastris* have informed me that there is no sign in the law books of untouchability as practised today. However, even if it is there, we shall have to reject it; otherwise we shall have to give up the claim that Hinduism is basically a non-violent and tolerant faith. This movement of ours is being carried on before the eyes of the world, not in seclusion. It is your duty as well as mine to do whatever we do, in a civilized, truthful, peaceful and courteous manner. I request the sanatanists, too, to carry out their task in a similar manner. I find no civility in the attempt to stop my car. They had better

[1] Brijlal Biyani

give up black flags and the burning of effigies. Nowadays, black flags are used as a mark of protest. When the satyagraha movement was on, black flags were sometimes used to express protest, but I had not approved of it. It is not a civilized practice. It bears no mark of satyagraha. A satyagrahi's dharma is to win over through friendship the heart of anyone who has become an enemy and bring about a change of heart in him. The rules of satyagraha do not vary when applied to dealings between one Hindu and another, between Hindus and Muslims or, between Indians and the British. The rules of satyagraha are equally applicable to all. There can be no room in it for breach of the peace, lack of civility, violence or hatred. Hinduism would come out triumphant if both the sanatanists and reformist Hindus acted in accordance with it, regardless of whether untouchability remains or not. Hinduism cannot survive if untouchability continues. However, it would be welcome if both the parties kept to the path of truth. This is a tremendous movement in which twenty-two crores of Hindus are being tested. It is also a test for Harijans. It is the caste Hindus who have sinned, hence, it is they who have to atone for it. Since Harijans are also Hindus, I say that it is a test for them too.

It is worth knowing what these ten or twelve people who have come from Kashi want. They say that I am free to continue the work of abolishing untouchability, I may carry on the work of temple-entry, but that I should not plead with the people in favour of the Bills on these two subjects which are before the Central Legislature, that I should not endeavour to get them passed. Others too claim that legislation will mean interference with religion. For the last two or three days I have been hearing such echoes. I have answered them to the best of my ability. We are bound by a pledge. Last year in September, representatives of the Hindus took a pledge under the chairmanship of Malaviyaji Maharaj in Bombay. I had drafted the original form of the pledge. The resolution which was passed was almost identical with the one proposed by me. I had given my word to Dr. Ambedkar and to Rao Bahadur Rajah that I was offering my life as hostage to see it that the Hindu society abides by the pledge. Hence it is my duty to persuade caste Hindus to do so. Both temple-entry and enabling legislation are part of the pledge. The Temple-entry Bill is harmless. Moreover, they are hardly likely to be passed because I want it. If it were so, they would have been passed long ago. One of the Bills has been published for [eliciting] public opinion. It is your dharma as well as mine

to work for its passage. It puts an end to the legal obstacle. Those temples which, under certain circumstances, could not, till this day, open their doors to Harijans will be permitted to do so. Today, it seems, although many people may be in favour of throwing open the temple doors, a single person can prevent it. This Bill seeks to remove the obstacle. There is no coercion. Those who believe that the image loses its sanctity by Harijans entering the temple may stop going there. But the majority are of the opinion that God does not come to dwell in the image until the Harijans are admitted. What should those who believe this do? If they did not have the legal obstruction removed, their pledge would be broken. The Bill harms no one. It has not the remotest suggestion of coercion.

The second Bill does not affect religious untouchability. It only says that untouchability has no place in law, in law-courts. On the one hand, we want the law not to interfere with religion and, on the other, we seek to perpetuate untouchability through the civil code. How could it be? Lawyers point out that today untouchability is sanctioned by law. It will be eradicated by having these two Bills passed; for that caste Hindus will have to undergo a change of heart. The Bills seek to protect those who disregard untouchability as well as the untouchables who enjoy no such protection today.

If we did not willingly abolish untouchability today, we shall have to give it up under compulsion in the future. We did not willingly let Harijans occupy the railway compartments; today they sit there in spite of us. Overwhelmed by selfish motives, we employ them in the mills. There is no merit in doing an act grudgingly.

At present, we are perched on their shoulders, we ought to get off. I ask you to contribute money in order to bring them justice. You and I would not want to live in the homes where Harijans live. They do not observe rules of sanitation, as they do not have the necessary facilities. They are illiterate. The task of removing their hardships cannot be accomplished without funds, hence I ask you for funds. Please do not contribute grudgingly. This is not like throwing away money on idle entertainment. This is an act of sacrifice, of dedication. If you contribute in the spirit of sacrifice, I shall be convinced that you have made a significant contribution. Even a cowrie given in a charitable spirit will suffice, whereas a rupee parted with in a niggardly spirit has no value. The service of Harijans is after all the service of God. But God gets His work done through man. He gets His

work done by one who feels His presence and fears Him. Your money by itself is not going to be enough for Harijans. Your real contribution is your sympathy for this cause. In the morning, Shrimati Durgatai placed her gold bangles, silver mug and tumbler before me and said that she had preserved with care these things which were dear to her; and that today she was giving them away for the service of Harijans. I ask all men and women to make such a sacrifice.

[From Gujarati]

Harijanbandhu, 3-12-1933

270. LETTER TO GORDHANBHAI PATEL

[*November 19, 1933*][1]

BHAI GORDHANBHAI,

Manibehn writes to me saying that you were grieved at my absence in Bombay at the time of the funeral. In a way I am happy about it. Your grief suggests that you regard me as a member of the family. You have a right to regard me as such. But if you regard me as one of the family you should ask me when you fail to understand my action. My differences with Vithalbhai had absolutely nothing to do with my not going there. My present circumstances were the sole reason behind my not going over. I am out of jail solely for Harijan work. The programme had already been fixed. I would not be willing to submit myself to such Government restrictions as do not deserve to be endured. Besides, I could not see myself likely to be useful in any other way. Again, my view of death as also my attitude towards funeral rites were likely to render me of no use whatever. Therefore, looking at it from any point of view, my attendance was not necessary, nay, it would have been improper. Why, I would not have permitted part of what happened. For me it should suffice to let you know that my differences with Vithalbhai were not in the least instrumental [in my decision]. You may not be aware that on receiving news of his illness I had written to him to which he had promptly sent a long and sweet reply. When his illness had aggravated, I had also wired to him, to which again he had replied. He also asked you to keep me informed about his health. Mistaking your wire to have been from Gordhanbhai, the Secretary of the Mill-owners' Association, I

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Dahyabhai Patel", p. 258.

sent a letter of thanks to the latter. He wrote to me that the wire was not from him. I hope this explanation would pacify you. If not, please do ask me again.

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro–4: Manibehn Patelne, pp. 156-7

271. *LETTER TO MANIBEHN PATEL*

(CHIKHALDA,)
November 19, 1933

CHI. MANI,

You are doing well to give expression to all that you and other relatives feel. I could not bear either Dahyabhai or Gordhanbhai misunderstanding me. If you are in Bombay, I think you will read my letter[1] to Gordhanbhai. If you wish to say anything after reading it, you may do so.

You must have got my letter. I see no need for me to write to the Press. I don't think it always necessary to reply every time I find newspapers misunderstand my actions or deliberately misrepresent them. If, however, you two, brother and sister, so desire, I will certainly do it. My position is quite clear. There is considerable truth in what Dahyabhai says. We can certainly point out blemishes in [C.R.] Das and others. Is there anybody who is blameless? But my not going there has nothing to do with Vithalbhai's shortcomings. He certainly deserved the same honour that the other leaders got. His self-sacrifice, determination, ability and his loyalty to the Congress were in no way inferior to those of the others.

Your own generosity fills me with admiration. But mind you, it is not peculiar to you. I have seen such generosity in countless women. They are always ready to forget the wrongs done to them. It is this virtue which is their special honour. But men have taken undue advantage of it. But that is a different story. May I take credit for your behaving so admirably in my eyes just now?

Write to Wardha.

Blessings from
BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro–4: Manibehn Patelne, pp. 115-6

[1] *Vide* the preceding item.

272. LETTER TO DAHYABHAI PATEL

November 19, 1933

CHI. DAHYABHAI,

You must have received my earlier letter[1]. Enclosed is a letter to Gordhanbhai. Give it to him after reading it. Do not forget that it is your duty to strive with me if you are not satisfied [with my explanation]. Pass on their letters to Ba and Mani.

Blessings from
BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro–4: Manibehn Patelne, p. 156

273. LETTER TO KISAN GHUMATKAR

Unrevised

AS AT WARDHA,
November 20, 1933

MY DEAR KISAN,

Have mercy on a poor old man. Why do you doubt me when I say I never was angry with you? Did you give me any cause for anger? Even now I do not know anything against you that would make me angry. It is but natural for young people not to understand old people. How should you understand what it is to be without teeth or muscle, or know at 20 what you would yourself feel when you are four times twenty? Old men are not too deep for young people to understand. They may be imbecile. Whatever your own experience in other cases, it is inapplicable in my case.

How nice it would have been if you would have joined me at Wardha. I would love to have you even now. But can you stand the very heavy strain of the tour? Are you strong enough in body and mind to be able to go through the eternal rush?[2] What does Dhurandhar say?

[1] *Vide* p. 227.

[2] The addressee's health had suffered after imprisonment in Thana jail.

I do receive news about Prema through the visitors who visit her companions. But you should continue to tell me all you come to know about her.

Love.

BAPU

From a photostat: G.N. 9069. Also C.W. 9688

274. LETTER TO MANEKLAL KOTHARI

November 20, 1933

CHI. MANEKLAL,

I liked your long letter. The simpler you grow the better. Vocational training will preserve the children's health, physical as well as mental.

Your comparison between the Indian States and the British [Government] is correct up to a point. But the reason behind this [difference] is that the States on their part are enslaved. The master's shortcomings are always found doubled in the case of his slaves. Hence what you experienced is due to the influence of the British Government. This does not mean that the States were any better before. But formerly their faults used to be removed jointly by the ruler and his subjects. Today such a phenomenon is well nigh impossible, because there is rot at the root.

The introduction of machines will certainly bring about an improvement in the economic condition of a few. Machines would not provide employment to thirty crores of people. They ought to get some additional work besides agriculture. And it cannot be anything but spinning. It would therefore be better if you start using khadi in your house. It is the experience of many that one can afford khadi if one restrains one's fondness for clothes. If all of you spin for some time daily and have the yarn woven, you will find khadi quite inexpensive. Also, Purushottam, Jamnadas, etc., can help you in this regard.

Ramdas is at Wardha. Keshu, Krishno are also there. Manu has gone to Rajkot because Kusum is ill. Maybe you know it. Ba has gone to Ahmedabad.

My health continues to be good. If you do not read the *Harijanbandhu*, start reading it now.

Blessings from
BAPU

[PS.]

Write to me at Wardha.

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./XXIII

275. LETTER TO RADHABEHN M. KOTHARI

November 20, 1933

CHI. RADHA,

I have written a long letter[1] to Maneklal, so I will not write a long one to you. It will satisfy me if you serve as much as you can.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./XXIII

276. LETTER TO KOTWAL

November 20, 1933

BHAI KOTWAL,

The work which has come to us unsought is *swadharma*. Anybody who is wedded to an institution should not, as a general rule, join the present battle. One's dharma cannot be pointed out to one by somebody else. He who has seen it adheres to it despite the opposition of the whole world.

We should not sit in judgment over anybody. Every case should ultimately be judged on its own merits. It is therefore dangerous to be guided by solutions of hypothetical cases.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 3604

[1] *Vide* the preceding item.

277. LETTER TO VIDYA A. HINGORANI

November 20, 1933

CHI. VIDYA,

Why don't you write? What sentence did Anand get? Are your studies progressing well? And your cooking? Don't be disheartened. Know that there is virtue in eating what one has cooked with one's own hands. Have you secured a sewing machine? Is the [sewing] class going on? How is Mahadev?

Blessings from
BAPU

[PS.]

Ask Kanta as also the other girls to write.

From a microfilm of the Hindi: Courtesy: National Archives of India and Anand T. Hingorani

278. LETTER TO DHIRU C. JOSHI

November 21, 1933

CHI. DHIRU,

I hope your anger with Rama has now left you.[1] Take care of your health. Continue to write to me. Whether you are writing to Rama or to me or to somebody else, you must see to it that your handwriting is good. Ask Balabhadra to write to me.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 5316

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Dhiru C. Joshi", p. 192.

279. SPEECH AT PUBLIC MEETING, MORSI

November 21, 1933

These differences[1] are verily offshoots of the curse of untouchability, for they proceed from a sense of superiority and inferiority. The fourfold division of varna is based on duty and not on right. Dharma does not confer rights but lays down obligations. Where all perform the duties that have fallen to their lot, no one is higher than the others. Once we are able to purge ourselves of untouchability, and with it the spirit of high and low, we shall realize the unity underlying all races and religions. In spite of the differences of races and religions, we shall learn to tolerate and respect one another and consider all human beings as children of one God and, therefore, brothers and sisters of one another. God is the Creator of all life; all His creatures are, therefore, equal in His eyes. Humanity is a gigantic tree having innumerable branches and leaves, and the same life throbs through them all. The realization of unity in diversity is implied in the removal of untouchability.

Harijan, 1-12-1933

280. LETTER TO D. B. KALELKAR

IN THE TRAIN,
November 22, 1933

CHI. KAKA,

You must have received the reply which I sent through Kishorelal. It was not right for you to have tried to climb the hill. You cannot get strength so soon. Be careful for some time yet about food and going out.

I have not been able to reply to . . .'s[2] son. Letters are accumulating every day. The programme of the tour has been so fixed that I get time to write letters only on the weekly silence day and between 3 and 4 a.m. every day. I don't see any pos-

[1] The reference is to the bitterness between the local Brahmins and non-Brahmins.

[2] The name has been omitted.

sibility of being able to help . . .'s[1] son just now. Whom can we appeal to for money? . . .'s[2] difficulty also has not been solved. must, therefore, rely on his own efforts at present. If I can rest peacefully any time in future, I may be able to do something for persons like him. But I am not likely to enjoy such peace in my lifetime. If you think you must write to him yourself, you may do so. I don't know when my teeth will be examined. I have been told that the condition of the teeth may be responsible for the pain in the elbow. It is very unlikely to be so, for there is no other trouble. The blood-pressure has disappeared completely, and the weight is going up. I have already reached 109.

I also had a letter from Soman[3].

* * *[4]

Chandrashankar is giving perfect satisfaction by his work. He seems to have learnt very well the art of looking after physical health. He is successfully copying Mahadev. I didn't know that he could write English so well. He has considerably lightened my burden. He is always engrossed in work.

I am sure you read the *Harijan* regularly for accounts of the tour.

Blessings from
BAPU

From the Gujarati original: C.W. 9480. Courtesy: D. B. Kalelkar

281. LETTER TO JIVANJI D. DESAI

IN THE TRAIN,
November 22, 1933

BHAI JIVANJI,

The Preface is not out of my mind. I understand what you say regarding Ratilal. It is not possible to give him any advice. What is destined will happen. If Baburao says anything, let me know. If the previous power [of attorney] cannot be revoked, this one may not be of any use.

Give me a report about S. in every letter. See him sometimes.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 9932. Also C.W. 6907. Courtesy: Jivanji D. Desai

[1] & [2] The names have been omitted.
[3] Ramachandra Soman
[4] Some lines have been omitted.

282. LETTER TO PRABHASHANKAR PATTANI

IN THE TRAIN,
November 22, 1933

SUJNA BHAISHRI,

I got your loving letter. I read the verse. Knowing that God is behind all, good and evil, I remain unaffected. If He was behind good only, I would certainly have felt uneasy. He alone is good. If I could persuade you to join me in this tour, your health would automatically improve. But I know that is impossible. I hope you glance through the issues of *Harijan*.

Why doesn't Ramabehn[1] remember me?

MOHANDAS

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 5931. Also C.W. 3247. Courtesy: Mahesh P. Pattani

283. MESSAGE TO THE PEOPLE OF BERAR[2]

November 22, 1933

In his message Mahatmaji says that the people of Berar gave an unlimited response to his call for Harijan service. The organization was most efficient and looked to all the comforts in the tour which has been a pleasant one.

The attendance at public meetings held throughout the tour was the largest ever seen and it gives me cause to hope that untouchability is fast dying.

Hitavada, 26-11-1933

[1] Addressee's wife

[2] Given in an interview to *The Times of India*

284. LETTER TO MAHADEV DESAI

Unrevised

RAIPUR,
November 23, 1933

MY DEAR MAHADEV,

On getting up at 3 a.m. I found your letter to Mira lying on the little stool which is being carried from place to place as a footboard for me to stretch my legs on. It took me nearly 40 minutes to go through it and yet without reading your comments on the translation of the verses specified.[1] It would take me at least twelve hours to read up my translation [of] the original and think out what I should say. It will take at least another three hours to reduce them to writing. That time I cannot give just now. Then there is the question—shall I help you much? I fear, not. For what you say is quite true. I ought not to have yielded to Swami's demand for my own translation except perhaps for private circulation among friends. I realized my unfitness for the task as I was proceeding but I continued. The defects you have noticed are there. How can I give what I have not—scholarship? Want of good knowledge of Sanskrit was a great drawback. The remedy is clear. You should go on with your translation taking such help as my translations can give to bring out my thought but not always following my translation. Give that rendering which is acceptable to you. Ignore the notes where they are useless. Give your own where they are necessary. Having done that, take up the Gujarati, correct the translation where it is defective and polish the language where it needs polishing. Re-write and add notes where necessary. That will complete your task. Then when the whole result comes into my hands, I shall work on it and make such changes as I may deem fit in order to bring out my meaning. This I can do easily. We must then bring out a revised version of the Gujarati and publish your translation in English.[2] So doing, you do not need to stop your work for want of my detailed reply to your comments.

[1] The addressee was translating *Anasaktiyoga* into English. *Vide* footnote 3, p. 99.

[2] The English translation was published in 1946 under the title *The Gospel of Selfless Action* or *The Gita According to Gandhi*; *vide* Vol. XLI.

I shall circulate your comments among friends and get their opinion and let you have it all.

Your other messages will be attended to.

I am glad you are going through the trials of various sorts. Only do not wash yourself out with mere literary work. You should take plenty of exercise and keep the body in a fit condition. You must not damage your eyes on any account whatsoever.

No more today.

Love from all.

BAPU

From a copy: S.N. 26906

285. LETTER TO PRABHAVATI

RAIPUR,
November 23, 1933

CHI. PRABHAVATI,

I got your letter. You have given two addresses. In your previous letter you gave the Siwan address and in this one you have given the Sitabadiara address. I am writing this letter at the latter address.

I have already written to you about Jayaprakash. I addressed that letter at Siwan. The present fight is not for people who have debts to pay and wish to discharge their responsibilities towards their brothers and sisters. This fight requires one to sacrifice one's all. How do a poor man's brothers and sisters get education ? We should adopt such a way that our brothers and sisters grow up in poverty and get educated and start earning as soon as possible. That leaves the problem of Father. The fifty rupees which he gets should suffice. Both of you should renounce your share in his property. Jayaprakash can remain in the present fight only if he is thus prepared to embrace poverty. This is a soldier's dharma. The other dharma is towards one's family. It also is worth following if one wishes to do so. When it becomes an absolute dharma, it is in conflict with the good of society as a whole. That is what we find among us today. It is the aim of satyagraha to remedy this situation. But anybody who does not understand satyagraha and still follows it fails in both dharmas for he will remain discontented. If you do not understand anything in this, you may ask me to explain again. But I don't think you will find any difficulty in understanding it.

I have already sent you the programme of my tour, and do not repeat it here. There is nothing now which you should specially come here to discuss with me. But I shall be in Jabalpur on Tuesday. Then I go to Delhi.

My weight is 109 and the blood-pressure 155-100. The diet remains the same.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 3435

286. LETTER TO VALLABHBHAI PATEL

RAIPUR,
November 23, 1933

BHAI VALLABHBHAI,

You really seem to have stopped writing to me. It was necessary for Jamnalalji to resign even for his own peace of mind. The resignation was desirable from the point of view of its effect on others, too. It has cleansed the atmosphere completely. A load is off Jamnalalji's mind and he feels much stronger now. I don't wish to write more. Please however have no doubts about the propriety of the step.

I hear that there has been a small breakdown in your health. Let me know if there has been any such thing. If you can tell me your weight, do so. Is there any trouble with your nose? I hope you wouldn't think it necessary to keep back anything from me.

Mahadev is being tested well. I am glad about it. There are difficulties now regarding Gujarati letters. I intend to write to the Colonel[1] in the matter, though I don't like to do even that.

I have had no letters from Devdas recently. Khurshed is improving. She remained ill for a fairly long time. I can't write more since it is time for the post.

I am going on well enough. The crowds are as large as ever, perhaps larger than before. And they are equally mad with love.

Blessings from
BAPU

[From Gujarati]
Bapuna Patro–2: Sardar Vallabhbhaine, p. 48

[1] E. E. Doyle, Inspector-General of Prisons, Bombay

287. SPEECH AT PUBLIC MEETING, RAIPUR[1]

November 23, 1933

I have repeatedly said that this work can be done only by those who sincerely believe untouchability to be a stain on Hinduism. This is a movement requiring the change of heart of millions. It cannot be led to success by any political manoeuvres. It can be done only through self-purification. This is a great sacrificial fire in which we have to burn our load of sins and come out purified. Those who do not take to this work with faith and spirit will fail to move the hearts of millions. We shall be nowhere if we deceive ourselves or the Harijans. The success or failure of this movement depends on our getting the right type of workers. We are on our trial today. If we miss today the opportunity that God has given us, we may never hope to get the opportunity again in this generation. What we refuse to do voluntarily today we shall have to do in future per force, and we shall repent for having lost this opportunity. I pray to God that we may come out successful from this trial and save Hinduism and ourselves from destruction.

Harijan, 1-12-1933

288. SPEECH AT ALL-INDIA SWADESHI EXHIBITION, RAIPUR

November 23, 1933

In a country where 95 per cent of the population live on the land, even if all the processes of cultivation were carried on through machines, there would still be need for a supplementary cottage industry. The spinning-wheel supplied that supplementary industry to the Indian peasant from time immemorial. Many minor industries are nowadays suggested for the purpose, but none of them can be universalized as the production of khadi

[1] According to Chandrashankar Shukla's report, the speech was addressed to Harijan workers. However, according to *The Bombay Chronicle*, 29-11-1933, and *Hitavada*, 3-12-1933, this was in reply to addresses presented by the Municipality, the Local Board and other institutions.

can be. I consented to open this exhibition, for I know that thousands of Harijans get their living through khadi, which has saved them from destitution. We may revive many other indigenous industries, may even start new ones, but we may not lose sight of khadi as the centre of all swadeshi.

Harijan, 1-12-1933

289. EXTRACTS FROM SPEECHES[1]

[Before *November 24, 1933*][2]

Injustice is being done all the world over, but we have given to it the sanction of religion. These distinctions have not been created by God. The Harijans are on the lowest rung of the ladder not because of any inherent defects but only because they have been kept down by the so-called higher castes. God had bestowed on them the same talents that He had given us, but we deny them the opportunities for using them. They should surely have the same rights and privileges and the same opportunities of growth that we enjoy.

We are now awake to the wrong we have done to them, and the least we can do by way of penance now is to contribute money for their uplift and to share with them all the amenities of life that we have created for ourselves. We are all creatures of the same God and, therefore, equal in His eyes.

From the money that you give for this cause, you will reap a hundredfold, for it is like grain sown in good, manured soil. The money spent after luxury and lust is, on the other hand, wasted like grain sown in barren soil.[3]

I am told you have suffered heavily. But you should know that no nation has ever come to its own without having passed through the severest fire of suffering. Voluntary suffering only adds to our strength. I, therefore, congratulate you for having suffered. But I should also like to remind you that one of the causes that add to our sufferings is this curse of untouchability. We have oppressed the weak. We reap as we have sown. It is for us now to undo the wrong we have done to the Harijans and remove the yoke of serfdom from their shoulders.[4]

[1] & [2] Reproduced from Chandrashankar Shukla's "Weekly Letter" which bears the date-line "Raipur, 24-11-1933". The places where Gandhiji spoke have not been indicated.

[3] What follows was spoken at a village.

[4] What follows was addressed to Harijans.

Caste Hindus must first ask you to forgive the wrongs they have done to you. But I should also tell you, as a Harijan by choice, that you should give up your evil habits, especially carrion and beef-eating. The whole world looks upon carrion with abhorrence. And beef-eating should be given up because that is a *sine qua non* for a Hindu. The cow is the giver of plenty, and by killing her we kill ourselves. Then, I would urge you not to accept leavings. And, above all, you should abolish the distinctions of high and low that have crept in among yourselves. And these things you should do, not in a bargaining spirit but because they are good in themselves. I would, therefore, ask you also to give up drink, irrespective of the fact that many other Hindus drink.

Harijan, 1-12-1933

290. CIVIL RESISTANCE AND HARIJAN SERVICE

A friend writes:[1]

> I observe that there are some people in the Harijan service organizations not working in the spirit in which you want them to, that is, merely for the sake of serving Harijans. They are seeking its shelter in order to satisfy other ambitions. . . . I know that you do not desire civil resistance to be mixed up with Harijan service organizations. If you propose to make any public use of this letter you may emphasize this last point and make it clearer. . . .

I am thankful to the friend for giving me the benefit of his experience. It is a most difficult task to keep a big organization like the Servants of Untouchables Society with branches all over India free of all self-seekers and time-servers. I have discussed the subject fully with Seth Ghanshyamdas and Thakkar Bapa. I know that they are both anxious to keep the organization as pure as possible. Personally I can do no more. It was because of my utter helplessness that I undertook the fast of 21 days. On discovering impurities amongst Harijan servants, I saw that it was no use merely writing about impurities. I was searching for a way out of the difficulty. The reader should believe me when I tell him that the fast was the last thing in the world that I was thinking of, but as I have described in these pages, it came to me all of a sudden and gave me great relief. I know

[1] Only extracts from the letter are reproduced here.

that it did much good. But, how far could the fast of a single mortal go? Hence it was that I developed the idea of a chain of such purificatory fasts. The idea has by no means been dropped. It comes to me again and again. But it does not admit of a mechanical organization. Several co-workers are ready to inaugurate or take part in the chain after it is inaugurated, but I have not yet found the way to begin it. The proper way will have to come to me or to the co-workers before the chain can be begun. Meanwhile I can only reiterate my conviction that untouchability will not be removed root and branch except through the service of men and women who take it up for its own sake and in a religious spirit. Unless we have a fair number of such servants throughout the length and breadth of India, we will never succeed in changing the hearts of millions of human beings. The *savarna* Hindus are at one end, Harijans at the other, and the evil custom of ages, which has assumed the dignity of religious tenet, will not be uprooted without penance and purification. Whilst it gladdens my heart that thousands of people flock to the meetings that are being held in towns and villages and that they willingly give their pices as a token of their approval of the movement, I am painfully conscious of the fact that, if the thousands were suddenly called upon to enforce in their own lives what they seem to approve by their attendance at these meetings, they would fail to respond, not from want of will, but from sheer inability. I have discovered this again and again amongst my closest associates who have frankly confessed their inability to enforce immediately in their conduct what they knew was the right thing and what they knew had to be done immediately. They had to put up a brave fight against their traditional repugnance. The mere intellectual grasp that untouchability is an evil, corroding Hinduism, and that belief in it is tantamount to disbelief in God, His goodness and His Fatherhood, is not enough to destroy the monster. The vicarious penance of the comparatively pure is needed to bring about a change in the hearts of both *savarnas* and Harijans.

A movement, so grand and so pure, so religious and so humanitarian, must not be exploited by anybody for his own end. Certainly, not for its political consequences. It will be discovered, as the movement progresses, that the political approach can only end in accentuating the strife. It can only add to the confusion already existing and add one more, if not many more warring parties, to the existing ones. May God save us and save the movement from such a calamity!

So far as the connection of civil resistance with the movement is concerned, I am as emphatic as ever that Congressmen who desire to offer active civil resistance should not accept office in the various organizations, and much less can they be used for serving the purpose of civil resistance. Civil resistance is a unique weapon, it does not admit of alloy. It is a weapon of the fearless and, therefore, needs no shelter; but it has to be wielded in the open daylight. Therefore, whilst Congressmen who are also civil resisters on active service may do, as they are bound to do, such service to the cause as they can, they may not belong to the Servants of Untouchables Society or any of its branches. By holding office in the organizations they will harm both civil resistance and the Harijan cause. It would be like a man going to a temple to pray and using the act of worship for advancing civil resistance. Neither God nor man will be cheated in that manner and, as I have said often enough in these columns, the great reformation of Hinduism will not be brought about, if it is to depend purely upon Congressmen. For, much as I would like to think that every Indian is Congressman, I know that such is not the case. Nor is every Hindu a Congressman, if only because every Harijan is not a Congressman. Therefore, a Harijan organization must in the very nature of things be strictly non-political and non-party and should contain in it both Congressmen and non-Congressmen, office-holding being restricted to those who are not active civil resisters and who will not exploit the office secretly or openly to advance the cause of civil resistance.

Harijan, 24-11-1933

291. HARIJAN WORKER'S DUTY

A correspondent sends me the following questions for answering:

> (1) In the propaganda against untouchability, should a worker make use of the Hindu Shastras and religious texts to show that Hinduism does not sanction untouchability as we practise it today?
>
> (2) Should a Harijan sevak, even in his private capacity, take part in inter-dining functions?
>
> (3) Should a Harijan who is employed as a domestic servant sit at meals alongside all the members of the family?

These three questions, the correspondent says, have been seriously discussed in the columns of a newspaper and the readers have been advised that Harijan workers ought not to make use

of religious texts in advocating the abolition of untouchability, and that, in the larger interest of the movement, the workers should not enforce their views about inter-dining and the rest, even in their private matters. I hold totally different views on these matters. For me, the removal of untouchability is fundamentally a religious question. Hinduism could not hold me if I believed that untouchability, as it is practised today, was an integral part of it. That it has been handed down to us as a custom is an undoubted fact, but so are many other bad customs among which untouchability is the worst. It becomes necessary, therefore, to show that it has no sanction in religion.

Whilst the Servants of Untouchables Society has very wisely limited the scope of its corporate activities, it does not regulate or restrict individual practice about inter-dining. The removal of untouchability does not require inter-dining with Harijans. Inter-dining is not a universal obligation. A Harijan worker must be left free to dine with whomsoever he pleases, and, therefore, with Harijans, without in any way being regarded as being on that account a less effective worker. My own practice is well known, and I should personally feel a hypocrite if I suppressed it 'in the larger interests of the reform'. I should undoubtedly refrain, if inter-dining were a mere matter of convenience or indulgence for me. Far from being either, I regard it as a desirable and an inevitable social reform. But it should not be mixed up with the drive against untouchability. The central point in the untouchability movement is the removal of social and religious injustice towards those who, being regarded as untouchables, are debarred from public utilities and spiritual comfort within the religion to which they belong. I should feel no deprivation if no one in the world took food that might be cooked or touched by me. But it would be a great deprivation to me if I could not send my children to the public school, or could not rent a house in any locality open to the other members of the public, or could not seek spiritual comfort in a temple designed for the other members of my faith.

As to the Harijan employee, if the members of a family employing a Harijan drew a line between him and non-Harijan servants, they would undoubtedly be guilty of observing untouchability. But I very much fear that we are a long way from that bright and happy day when we shall be all masters and no servants, or all servants and no masters, all members of the human family, regarding ourselves as blood-brothers and blood-sisters.

Harijan, 24-11-1933

292. *LETTER TO MARGARETE SPIEGEL*

[As at] Wardha,
November 24, 1933

CHI. AMALA,

I was glad you were doing so well. Did I say I would write twice a week? I thought I had said you could write twice a week.

Of course you may give as much time to Hindi as you like. Yes, when you are quite fit, you will find your place wherever I put you.

Love.

Bapu

Smt. Amalabehn
Satyagraha Ashram
Wardha, C.P.

Spiegel Papers. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

293. *LETTER TO C. F. ANDREWS*

November 24, 1933

MY DEAR CHARLIE,

I have just heard from Sir P. Pattani that he would begin to pay Gurudev Rs. 1,000 per month from December till the Rs. 5,000 are paid out.[1] It will be all right now.

The enthusiasm of the people and the attendance are phenomenal and exceed my expectations which were fairly high. You will find it all faithfully described in the columns of *Harijan* which as you must have observed has been transferred to Madras. The people are paying handsomely. If these crowds are not an indication that untouchability is fast going, I do not know what can prove it. It must take time for the mighty reform to be felt.

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Prabhashankar Pattani", p. 180.

Later.

The foregoing was written amid interruptions. Your letter written during the voyage or in Bombay has just been received. About Gurudev's visit to Bombay I have written very little. I do not even know what is going on. I can hardly read papers during this rush. But of course he would be quite all right in so far as the reception is concerned. Of money he is not likely to get much. My appeal about Orissa is bringing very little.

Of course, Elwin should go his way and be left in God's hands. But friends must issue warnings when they have doubts as to the propriety of actions on merits. It is difficult to say when it is God's voice and when it is not. Strangers have to judge every act on its merits. This is applicable of course to my claim in connection with my fasts. I wrote a long letter to E. on what appeared to me his hasty departure from Matheran and avoidance of Wardha. I have not heard from him at all after his going back to Karanjia.

I hope I shall not have to cable you to return. The Magistrates have not worried me up to now. And when and if they do you would be too late for guidance. You should therefore trust me to God even as Efy is doing, even as you are trusting E. to God. I know that He is guiding me.

Love.

MOHAN

[PS.]

Send your letters to Wardha.

From a photostat: G.N. 983

294. LETTER TO AGATHA HARRISON

November 24, 1933

MY DEAR AGATHA,

No long letter this week. Here is a letter[1] for C. F. A. The cuttings will give you some indication of the progress of the tour. These of course you will share with friends as you may think necessary.

I do not think of the political atmosphere. It is as bad as ever. It does not worry me much and it will not worry me at all if there was chivalry and gentlemanliness on the part

[1] *Vide* the preceding item.

of the officials. The insatiable desire for humiliating everybody and every organization is terrible. But enough of this grumbling.

Love.

BAPU

From a photostat: G.N. 1475

295. LETTER TO VASUMATI PANDIT

November 24, 1933

CHI. VASUMATI,

I wrote several letters to you. I hope you got them. I got one letter from you. You seem to have done quite good reading. It seems you have given up the study of English. Tara has got one tooth extracted and is suffering extreme pain. She had to be kept under chloroform for one hour. She is a little better now. I have started a long tour. Except for two days [in the week], I have to travel every day. I am accompanied by Mirabehn, Om and Chandrashankar, and of course Thakkar Bapa. There are others too, but you do not know them. So far I have kept good health. Ba and Manibehn have gone to Ahmedabad. Totaramji will take Hariprasad with him and go and live in the Harijan Ashram. The Satyagraha Ashram has now become Harijan Ashram. My weight stands at 108. My normal diet is milk, oranges and one green vegetable.

I have dictated this letter to Om during my meal.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 9338. Also C.W. 584. Courtesy: Vasumati Pandit

296. *SPEECH AT PUBLIC MEETING, RAIPUR*

November 24, 1933

Ever since I came to your province you have been showering love on me and I am still bathing in it. Here also you have further delighted me by presenting me this purse. You would be right if you believe that you should give me money to please me, and especially so if you fulfil one condition. It is that those who have given money should feel that they have contributed to a *yajna* of self-purification. The money that is given can only be a token of your contribution to that *yajna*. But if they think that they have done all that they need to by giving the money, it would be the worst characteristic of a clever Bania. It would be as if by giving that money they had bought the right to enjoy themselves as they wished. Such charity can be of no benefit to the Harijans. I do not deny that money is very badly needed for Harijan work; but it is more important for their service that you should accept the Harijans with your heart. The real purpose of this tour is that you should discard the notion of untouchability from your heart and banish feelings of high and low. If you give me no help in realizing that aim and give me only money, it would be difficult even to use that money. If you do not know it, please note that at least 75 per cent of the money collected from this place will be used for the Harijan work here. There are two conditions, however, and they are also meant for the success of this work. In the first place, a good scheme for the use of that amount should come from you, and along with that there should be an indication of the persons who would carry out the scheme. A scheme may be good on paper, but it will be useless and will fail if there was nobody to implement it. That is why I said that, if your heart is not behind your contribution, the money you have given will be as good as useless. And if this happens, it would be diverted to other places where better workers and better schemes are forthcoming. You would not be happy if this happens. We who have come here do not wish to do any such thing. Our intention is to use at least 75 per cent of the money in the place from where it is collected. If, however, you do not give your full co-operation in this work, nothing can be done with the money alone.

It is a matter of joy for the country and for Hindus that at every place people gather in such large numbers. I am working in the faith that all these people come to the meetings to help me in my work of removing untouchability. If they come because they think that I have served the country in the past, and in order to praise my past services, they are guilty of great deception. I think of no other work just now. I have undertaken this tour only for Harijan work, and not to hear my praises. Hence, only those who wish to help me in this work or criticize it should attend the meetings. Those who wish to oppose the work should express their opposition courteously and in a becoming manner. In a religious cause, forgetting courtesy means forsaking dharma itself. Rudeness and lack of courtesy go ill with religion. Religion must be accompanied with gentleness, courtesy, culture and compassion. I do not wish to waste my time.

It would no doubt pain me to know that the Hindu masses are not with me. But it would pain me all the more if they attend the meetings to deceive me and themselves. I have got to follow my dharma even if everybody deserts me. The scriptures say that you need not have anyone on your side for following dharma, that you need God alone. Following dharma is a matter for each individual himself. One must do one's duty to the best of one's ability. God will look after the rest. The dharma of fighting untouchability is precious like a gem. I have placed it before you. This is no ordinary gem which can be used only by one person or which would wear off by use. Millions can use the gem of dharma; the more the people use it, the brighter will it shine.

There is no doubt at all that unless we wipe out the blot of untouchability from Hinduism, both Hinduism and Hindu society will perish. Peoples and their religions are being compared and judged all over the world. We are living in an age when we can travel to distant places in a few days by train and go round the world by sea. And now aeroplanes too are coming into use. In an age like this, all religions are exposed to the eyes of the world. If we fail in this scrutiny we may be sure that we are doomed. The world has a right to make such a comparison. That which cannot be placed before the world and which is not acceptable to reason and the heart cannot be sanatana dharma. Sanatana dharma means imperishable Truth.

I was glad when I was told that Bharatdasji intends to throw open his temple to Harijans. The site of the temple is very beautiful. I performed the opening with God as witness. The Harijans had

cheerfully come in large numbers. The scriptures have laid down two or three conditions for the Harijans or other people who visit a temple. They must enter the temple with a pure heart and body. Observing rules of personal cleanliness is as necessary in the case of Harijans as in that of the other Hindus, and, therefore, they should be duly observed by them. The second condition is that they should give up eating beef and carrion. The latter is prohibited in every religion. I am not aware of civilized and religious-minded people eating carrion, anywhere in the world. It is abhorred by all mankind. Harijans must give up these two things irrespective of whether or not they are accepted by the caste Hindus. If they consider themselves Hindus, they must give up beef also. Now there is a fourth thing, which I cannot describe as an inseparable part of Hinduism, though it is so according to me. And that is abstention from intoxicating drinks. Other Hindus may or may not give them up, but you should definitely do so. It is a very bad habit. A bad habit should not be copied. Moreover, you want to progress, and so you must give up drinking. Other Hindus will follow your example. Giving up intoxicating drinks will save the country crores of rupees and change a man from a monster into a human being. You must not consume the thing that makes you forget how you should behave to a mother or a sister. Those who are used to collecting and eating leavings must give up that unclean habit for good. Eating the leavings is not for human beings. It is the fault of the caste Hindus that you have got into this habit. In their ignorance caste Hindu women give leavings to Harijans. Instead of that, they should keep apart a certain portion every day for Harijans from what they may have cooked for themselves. My mother always used to feed us and take her meal only after keeping apart the portions for the guest, the poor and the cow. It is a cultured tradition in a good household that such portions be kept apart. Similarly, you also should take out something for the Bhangi Harijans and give it to them with love. It is not civil to throw food in the fold of the dress or in a vessel from a distance. It is an act of contempt. There is no politeness in it but lack of it. Caste Hindu women should give up throwing leavings to Harijans and the latter should stop accepting them. Harijan men and women who visit temples should observe the rules that may be applicable to all the varnas equally.

The Satnami Harijans at Dhamtari told me the painful story that the barbers and the washermen there do not work for them because they are considered untouchables. Those who told me this

were as clean as ourselves. When I visited their dwellings, I found that they were not more unclean than the houses of other Hindus. In the course of my tours in the country, I have got an impression that the houses of Bhangis are cleaner than those of other Hindus. It is tyrannical that washermen and barbers should not serve such people. It is painful and a matter of shame for us that when such a great movement of self-purification is going on barbers and washermen should refuse to serve these people. I do not blame the washermen and barbers for this. It is the doing of the so-called high-caste Hindus who have misled them. They have put the idea into their minds that they would be incurring sin if they worked for the Harijans. Since they have got such an idea, they hesitate to serve the Harijans. This should not be. Other people who know better should explain this to the barbers and washermen. Educated young men from among the caste Hindus should learn hair-cutting and washing clothes. And they should go to Harijans and tell them that they are ready to cut their hair and wash their clothes. If the educated people do this, the simple-hearted barbers and washermen would do it too. When they find that even the people who are not bothered about money are doing such work, they also would do it. There is no question of religious degradation in this. No sanatanist has told me that barbers, washermen, doctors, etc., cannot serve Harijans. I do not know how the idea that it is dharma to refuse such service originated. Such barbarism should go forthwith.

[From Gujarati]
Harijanbandhu, 17-12-1933

297. SPEECH AT BALODA BAZAAR[1]

November 25, 1933

Gandhiji declared open to Harijans a private temple, saying that the temple had on that day become a true abode of God with the Harijans' entry into it. Asking Harijans to observe three conditions of temple-entry, which apply equally to all temple-going Hindus, he said:

I request you to contribute your full share to this movement of self-purification, not by money but by a thorough cleansing of the heart and body and by removing the evil habits that have crept in amongst you. Though I admit with shame that the caste

[1] This appeared in *Harijan* under the title "Conditions for Temple-entry".

Hindus are responsible for many of these evil habits, I should like you to do your own part by giving up carrion and beef-eating and observing the common rules of cleanliness. These three conditions apply equally to all Hindus who want the right of worship in Hindu temples. I should like you to give up drink also, irrespective of the fact that even some caste Hindus indulge in that intoxication. You may not imitate their vices. Drink is one of the most degrading of vices, reducing man to the state of brute. It vitiates both body and soul. It spells utter ruin of the moral and domestic life. I would, therefore, request Harijans in all earnestness to give up that vice and set a noble example of self-purification not only to caste Hindus but perhaps to the whole world.

Harijan, 8-12-1933

298. SPEECH AT BILASPUR[1]

November 25, 1933

You may know, if you do not know already, that I have been closely associated with labourers ever since I went to South Africa. Whenever I have gone among labourers, in South Africa, India or whatever part of the world, they have recognized me as a fellow-labourer and received me as one of themselves. You will perhaps be surprised to know that even labourers in Lancashire instinctively recognized me as one of themselves and flocked around me in hundreds and thousands. The only difference between us is that I have become a labourer by choice whilst you have been made labourers by force of circumstances and would perhaps love to be masters if you could. I early gave up the ambition of becoming the master for I would then have belonged to an inconsiderate class and could not have identified myself, as I do today to the best of my ability, with the penniless pauper, the half-starved and the naked, the lowliest and the lost. I want labourers not to deplore, much less to despise, their lot and to realize the dignity of labour. It is meet that you have come forward with your purse as a token of your sympathy with the Harijans. Who has suffered so much as they? They are at the lowest rung of the ladder. The terrible hardships and privations they have to undergo can

[1] Delivered at the B. N. Railway Labourers' Federation. This appeared in *Harijan* in two parts under the titles "A Great Equalizer" and "On Behalf of Humanity".

never be imagined by those who have not been victims to them. Other labourers may aspire to amass wealth and to become masters some day and thus to rise in the scale of social prestige; but the Harijans can never entertain that ambition. The stigma of untouchability attaches to them from the mother's womb. They are born outcastes and remain outcastes till death. They have to live in segregated areas and are denied the amenities of life that the others enjoy. Even water, that free gift of God, is denied to them. I ask the Labour Federation to abolish all distinctions between Harijans and yourselves. I make the appeal deliberately for, being in direct touch with the mill-hands in Ahmedabad, I know that labourers do observe the distinction between Harijans and non-Harijans. I expect labourers, more than all others, to efface these distinctions. It has been my deep faith that we shall some day achieve communal unity through labourers. I consider labour to be a powerful unifying agent. It is a great equalizer. It should be a matter of shame to have communal divisions among labourers, who all earn their bread by the sweat of their brow and, therefore, belong to one vast brotherhood. Let them, therefore, begin with a thorough removal of untouchability. It will be a great step towards communal unity. Once the bar sinister against Harijans is removed, the way will be open for a wider unity among Hindus, Mussalmans and other sister communities.

A Mussalman friend asked why Gandhiji, a national leader, had chosen for the time being to work only among a section of the nation. This question drew the following reply from Gandhiji.

I am trying to serve all communities today through this work. They are branches of one big family. I have found in the Hindu branch a disease which, if not removed in time, will spread through the whole family and destroy it. The evil of untouchability has travelled far beyond its prescribed limits. In trying to root out untouchability among Hindus, I am trying to serve all the communities. Though the method of achieving communal unity through conferences has failed, I have not despaired of a heart-unity being achieved in the end. God has sent me this work, and I am doing it in the faith that the way to a real communal unity will be paved through it. It is thus to my mind a service of the whole nation. The effort I made in 1920-21 to achieve Hindu-Muslim unity will go down in history and will serve as the foundation of the edifice of communal unity whenever it is achieved. I have never repented for having made that effort. For me it was not a matter of expedience. I am not aware

of having done a single thing in my life as a matter of expedience. I have ever held that the highest morality is also the highest expedience. Some European friends assure me that I am waging this war against untouchability on behalf of the whole of humanity. Once this canker is removed from Hinduism, Hindus, Mussalmans and others will sink their differences and will embrace one another as blood-brothers, and all communities will feel that they are all branches of the same tree.

Harijan, 8-12-1933

299. LETTER TO MARGARETE SPIEGEL

RAIPUR,
November 26, 1933

MY DEAR AMALA,

What have you done to your finger? Dwarakanathji says you have hurt yourself. I hope you are not overstraining yourself. I want you to do everything with joy and infinite patience.

It appears that on the 15th December we shall be passing through Wardha as was originally arranged. The programme was altered so as to omit Wardha and go *via* Calcutta. But now the original programme has been restored. While I admire your self-restraint in not coming to the station last time, I would like you to come on the 15th, if you get Dwarakanathji's permission.

I see that you are spinning much better than you used to, and you have prepared your strand nicely and neatly. I am sure that by proper application you would be able to spin finer, stronger and much more even. I hope that there is not much waste nowadays and that you know how to mend your wheel if it goes out of order. I hope you are just as happy as our Japanese friend. You will be surprised to know, when years ago in South Africa I first cut my own hair, it looked as if rats had been at it. My lawyer friends cracked jokes at my expense. But I survived their jokes and I was able to do much better next time. The same thing happened with my first trial at ironing shirts and collars. I do not mention this incident to induce you to repeat your experiment. You should get your hair cut by the barber who gets a fixed salary no matter how many heads he treats.

Love.

BAPU

Spiegel Papers. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

300. LETTER TO M. BAPI NEEDU

November 26, 1933

MY DEAR BAPI NEEDU,

Please tell all the workers that I expect great things from Andhradesha, not merely fat donations but also many pure-hearted and self-sacrificing servants of Harijans.

Yours sincerely,
BAPU

The Hindu, 6-12-1933

301. LETTER TO JAMNALAL BAJAJ

RAIPUR,
November 26, 1933

CHI. JAMNALAL,

I got your letter.

Lakshmidas seems to have written what he did on the basis of what Anandi might have told him. I hope you remember that she had even come to know the name. But we needn't worry about this. Lakshmidas is not likely to misunderstand anything. I am sure that you didn't divulge the name.

I have written to Dwarakanath about the honey. I have asked him to send a bottle with somebody to whichever place it may be convenient to do so.

Jawaharlal writes and informs me that the Working Committee will be meeting in Jabalpur on the 5th. He seems to be expecting that you will attend. Do you feel inclined to come? If you don't wish to, I will not mind. Come if you feel like it. This will mean that you will have to leave that place on the 3rd or the 4th instead of on the 7th. I certainly don't like that you should sacrifice so many days from your stay there.

Mathuradas is coming here tomorrow. I don't know what brings him here.

I observe that Om has a sharp intelligence. And she has simple habits, too. She has fine health. She seems to be enjoying everything. I also give her some writing work. She

sleeps near me. Her capacity to sleep is quite good! She has won everybody's love.

Has Janakimaiya recovered some peace of mind? Is Kamla progressing satisfactorily? Can she walk? How do Madalasa[1] and Vatsala[2] spend their time? I send with this an important letter received from Manilal. Keep it in a file. It contains some comments about the Cow-protection Society and a list of the jewellery.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 2927

302. LETTER TO RAMABEHN JOSHI

November 26, 1933

CHI. RAMA,

You may write to me. How do you feel there now, both physically and mentally? Is there any difficulty about the arm now? How is Vimu[3]? Does Dhiru write to you? I hope you got Nanabhai's letter. There is no cause for anxiety.

What is Nirmala Joshi's[4] address?

Did you get a letter from Chhaganlal? I am eager to know whether he got my long letter. Ask Vimu to write to me.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 5358

303. LETTER TO PREMABEHN KANTAK

November 26, 1933

CHI. PREMA,

I got news about you from time to time from Sushila, and also from some others. I am glad that you got my letter. Whether you gained or lost, you will be able to judge only after you are released. There is no doubt that the experience is invaluable.

[1] Addressee's daughter, wife of Shriman Narayan
[2] Vatsala Dastane
[3] Addressee's daughter, Vimala
[4] Wife of Kevalram Bhimji Joshi

I understood your time-table. I am very happy that you have been able to preserve your health. The key was in your own hands and I see that you have used it well.

What can I write about Harijan work? It is going on. I have been experiencing people's boundless love. My body also has been giving excellent service. The weight had risen to 110 lb. This is no ordinary improvement. Chandrashankar is trying hard to fill Mahadev's place. Mirabehn also is here. And there is Ramnath, whom you do not know. Besides, there is Janakibehn's Om. She is a brave girl and also has a fine intelligence. God has kept her in excellent health, too.

I don't have time to write more now. I have to write many other letters. It is only during the silence period that I can write most of my letters.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 10352. Also C.W. 6791. Courtesy: Premabehn Kantak

304. LETTER TO D. B. KALELKAR

November 26, 1933

CHI. KAKA,

I never get time to write a sufficiently long letter to you.

I was shocked to read . . . 's[1] letter. Is he really mad? I hesitate to believe that the lady yielded to force, though it is possible that she was unwilling. Even if, however, it was a case of rape, she ought not to resort to abortion. She should rear the child with love. However, she must live away from her husband.

* * *[2]

What happened about your teeth!

Do you still suffer from backache?

I received the three books on astronomy.

I suppose Chandrashankar writes to you and gives you other news.

Blessings from
BAPU

From the Gujarati original: C.W. 9475. Courtesy: D. B. Kalelkar

[1] The name has been omitted.

[2] A paragraph has been omitted.

305. LETTER TO VIDYA R. PATEL

November 26, 1933

CHI. VIDYA,

How are you now? Are your monthly periods normal? Do you pass normal stools? Do you get any discharges in urine? Do you hear from Raojibhai? What is your diet?

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C.W. 9635. Courtesy: Ravindra R. Patel

306. LETTER TO VIDYA A. HINGORANI

November 26, 1933

CHI. VIDYA,

I got your letter. Anand has escaped with a light sentence. Send him my blessings. Have you received any letter from your father-in-law? If you give up your inhibition, you will need no servant. God has endowed you with money but what should a poor mother do? Try to stand on your own two feet, albeit gradually. Mahadev is growing in age. He will not need much help for long. Dwarakanathji writes that some arrangement has been made now. Don't you churn butter? Do render some kind of public service and consider everyone around you as your own. You must not worry at all; write to me at once if there is anything amiss.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a microfilm of the Hindi. Courtesy: National Archives of India and Anand T. Hingorani

307. LETTER TO BRIJKRISHNA CHANDIWALA

November 26, 1933

CHI. BRAJKRISHNA,

Your letter. I sent a wire to Dr. Ansari immediately on getting it. He must have seen you. What a pity that no one can

be found in your house or outside to recite the *Gita*. Tulsidasji has offered us a Gita in the form of Ramanama to cope with such a situation. We do not have to commit Ramanama to our memory—it is done no sooner than it is uttered—what we are required to do is to commit it to our hearts. Regard Ramanama as the true medicine for you. If God spares your life, you should teach the small children of your family to recite from the *Gita*.

What more shall I say? You are with us every moment. You have of course acquitted yourself well in the role of a worthy son. But how shall I become a worthy father?

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 2402

308. SPEECH AT RAJKUMAR COLLEGE, RAIPUR[1]

November 27, 1933

When I received your invitation I felt at once that, if the Reception Committee here could make the necessary time, I would love to address this audience of students who, when they have finished their education, will be called upon to bear a great responsibility and burden. And it was a matter of great pleasure to me that the Reception Committee was able to set apart one hour for this function. I thank you, Sir, for having extended this invitation to me, thereby enabling me to deliver my message to the youths who are at present under your kind care. You were thoughtful enough to send a message to my host, Shuklaji[2], that, whilst I could address this audience in Hindustani if I so chose, you would appreciate it if I addressed them in English; and you were good enough, when I exchanged a letter with you, to tell me that many of the boys under your care did not know Hindustani. I at once decided to address you, in spite of my ordinary practice to the contrary, in English. Your Principal inadvertently supplied me also with a text for my message. I would like you, sons of Chiefs in these territories, to remember that you would be expected not merely to confine yourselves, in these days of progressive enlightenment and rapid inter-communication, to your comparatively very small territories, but you would be expected to extend your

[1] Published in *Harijan* under the title "Princes and Untouchability"
[2] Ravishankar Shukla

horizon; and if you will do so, as I have no doubt you will be obliged to do by force of circumstances, it will be necessary for you not merely to know the languages of the province in which your lot is cast, but you will be expected to know also the language that is most universally used in this country. And you may not know, all of you, I am sure, do not know, that over 22 crores of the people of this country know sufficient Hindi or Hindustani to be able to understand what is spoken to them and to express themselves, however broken their language may be. No Indian having to shoulder the responsibility that you will have to shoulder can possibly afford to ignore such a universal language. There is a method in my mad love of Hindi. I am a lover of the English language, and I would like to speak in the English language as well as is possible for a foreigner to do and compete with Englishmen. I know that I am far away from that consummation. Whatever English I know is due to my having lived for years among Englishmen and English-speaking men. I count hundreds of Englishmen and women as close friends. So you will not misunderstand me when I tell you that it is your duty to understand Hindustani and I will beg the Principal and his staff to realize the special condition of this country and to feel with me that it is desirable for the Chiefs of India to understand Hindustani, through which alone they can know the India of the people.

This brings me to the central point of my message. We have been in the midst of Englishmen in various walks of life. I have had the painful duty very often of criticizing the policy of the rulers. I have not minced words. I have spoken straight from my heart, but as I have told you, I claim the closest friendship with hundreds of Englishmen. I cannot forget some of their priceless virtues. I propose to single out one of them for you. In England there is a living family tie between its noblemen and their domestic servants. It was a matter of joy to me on visiting them in their homes to find that there was a subtle bond of affection between them and their servants. There was no untouchability there. What I have told you is literally true of hundreds of the noblemen of England. Wherever I went, it was an unexpected pleasure to me at the end of the visit to be introduced to the domestic staff not as inferior beings but as members of the family. I wish that you would copy this virtue in your own lives. There is unfortunately among us a feeling that Chiefs are Chiefs and they can never make common cause with the ordinary people and so you find the tragedy —however necessary it may be today—that special schools and

colleges have got to be built for you. You dare not, you will not, go to common schools and colleges. You may not know that King Edward and the present King, I am speaking subject to correction, worked in the Navy as if they were ordinary sailors and that both father and son shared the hardships of a sailor's life. Will you do that? You are confined as it were to hothouses and are taught to believe that you have been gifted with special divinity by God. Believe me there is absolutely no difference whatsoever between you and the common folk except this that you have opportunities that are denied to them. But if you do not make use of the opportunities God has given you, it will be counted against you in God's book of accounts. Know that the essence of education lies in drawing out the very best that is in you. You and I can take the positive comfort that all of us have an equal potential capacity for being good or bad. I, therefore, feel that all your education will be vain, if you do not learn the art of feeling one with the poorest in the land.

This brings me in the natural course to untouchability. In no other part of the world has a patent evil like untouchability been claimed to possess religious sanction as it has in Hindu India. But, if you have agreed with me so far, you are bound to regard the Harijan as an integral part of common humanity. You have to realize your oneness even with him. It may be that your parents will dispute the proposition that untouchability is an unmixed evil. You will then have to show the courage of your conviction even as young Prahlad did. The idea of hereditary superiority and inferiority is, in my opinion, repugnant to the spirit of Hinduism which teaches oneness of all life in unequivocal terms. The religions of mankind are being examined and tested both analytically and synthetically. And I have no doubt that, if Hindus cling to untouchability, Hinduism and Hindus will be swept out of existence. I cling to Hinduism because it gives me all the solace I need and because I have found in it no warrant for untouchability as we know it today.

If I have invited you to copy the virtues of Englishmen, I must with deference to English friends present here warn you against their vices. That immortal poet-saint Tulsidas has left us a verse[1] full of deep truth. He says that we should live even as the fabled swan does, sift virtue from vice and take the former, leaving the latter alone. I would have you, therefore, to leave alone their two national vices, drink and races. Many English-

[1] For the verse from the *Ramacharitamanasa*, *vide* Vol. XXXIV, p. 547.

men deplore them. I have seen many an English home being ruined by the craving for liquor and gambling at the races. And so have many princes been ruined by them. I hope that you will learn to shun these two evils.

Harijan, 8-12-1933

309. LETTER TO JAWAHARLAL NEHRU

November 27, 1933

MY DEAR JAWAHARLAL,

Here is Gasavi's letter. I am telling him, I see no objection to the Party so long as it is not claimed as the Congress Party and that in any case he should seek your advice.

I note that we are to meet at Jubbulpore on 5th December. I shall try to give more time, if it is at all possible.

Have I not sent you the programme for C.P.? More than that was not ready till now.

So you are being gradually disburdened of shares and the like. I am not sorry. From my point of view the ideal thing would be a voluntary surrender of all the property you have, either to an institution or to those members of the family who do not want to throw themselves into the battle which is bound to be prolonged and perhaps increasingly bitter. In the final heat only those will be able to stand who have no property and nowhere to rest their heads on. But it is no use worrying over the future. Whatever happens you will be found in the front rank.

I am glad that Mother is making steady progress. I wonder if she knows all that is happening.

Yes, I did read your attack on the Hindu Sabha. It might have been less fierce. The summary made you speak like a partisan.

Love.

BAPU

[PS.]

You will find the dates in the enclosed programme.

Gandhi-Nehru Papers, 1933. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

310. LETTER TO DUNICHAND

November 27, 1933

DEAR LALA DUNICHAND,

Please excuse the delay in replying. When I tour in your district, I do not know any other house that would harbour me and then you would be your own committee and therefore you will decide my fate for your district.

Let me save a few pice by making this serve for both—you and Mrs. Dunichand. She will be free to travel with me. Let her know that we already make a big party and descend like locusts upon every home we go to.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

LALA DUNICHAND
KRIPA NIWAS
AMBALA CITY
(PUNJAB)

From a photostat: G.N. 5584

311. LETTER TO DUDHIBEHN V. DESAI

November 28, 1933

CHI. DUDHIBEHN,

I got your letter; I was waiting for it. How is your health? I see that other Ashram girls also are there. Who are they? Look after all of them.

Do you read or write anything?

The Wardha address is given on the back.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C.W. 3188. Courtesy: Valji G. Desai

312. LETTER TO MAHENDRA AND SUDARSHAN DESAI

November 29, 1933

CHI. MANU AND MAVO,

I got the letters of you both. I am still not satisfied with your handwriting. You should try to improve it. Write to me from time to time. I often feel during the tour how fine it would have been if I were going with you. I always enjoy moving around with children, especially on foot as during the Dandi March.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C.W. 3162. Courtesy: Valji G. Desai

313. LET EVERY CASTE HINDU REMEMBER[1]

That the following resolution was unanimously passed on his behalf by the meeting of his representatives held in Bombay on 25th September, 1932, Pandit Malaviyaji being in the Chair:

> This Conference resolves that henceforth, amongst Hindus, no one shall be regarded as an untouchable by reason of his birth, and that those who have been so regarded hitherto will have the same right as other Hindus in regard to the use of public wells, public schools, roads and all other public institutions. This right shall have statutory recognition at the first opportunity and shall be one of the earliest Acts of the Swaraj Parliament, if it shall not have received such recognition before that time.
>
> It is further agreed that it shall be the duty of all Hindu leaders to secure, by every legitimate and peaceful means, an early removal of all social disabilities now imposed by custom upon the so-called untouchable classes, including the bar in respect of admission to temples.

Harijan, 1-12-1933

[1] This was repeated in the *Harijan* issues of December 8, 22 and 29. *Vide* also Vol. LI, p. 139.

314. NOTES

The Late Lala Gangaram of Sialkot

It was only through the kind offices of a friend that I came to learn of the recent death of Lala Gangaram. He died on the 4th [November] of heart failure, at the age of 60. I had the privilege of meeting him in Lahore at the late Rambhajdutt Chowdhury's house in 1919 when he was introduced to me as a thorough-going Harijan worker. His was a life of dedication to the Harijan cause. He was instrumental in founding Harijan colonies. His death is a distinct loss to the cause. I offer my condolences to the family of the deceased and to the Harijans who were under his special care.

Avoid Waste

Reception Committees have been encouraging the habit of presenting flower garlands and bouquets by everyone who will do so. Such presentations are a waste of time and money in a tour undertaken on behalf of the lowliest. If garlands must be presented, let them consist of undamaged strands of yarn which can be used for weaving. There are Harijan weavers who are idle for want of hand-spun yarn. These will not weave mill-spun yarn. The best thing is to avoid all garlanding. And where reception without garlanding is considered impossible, let the garlands be accompanied by money. The practice of accompanying garlands with money became a feature after Wun and it has already added a few hundred rupees to the amount of donations received. Let the public note what one pice means in this country and in the hands of the hungry and despised. It makes the dole that charity gives per head to the famishing in flood-stricken Orissa. Let the doubters see the hovels in which the Harijans are living. Let them visit the low-lying Harijan lane of Hinganghat, where in the rainy season it is hardly possible to exist. They will then understand the value of the pice that goes into the pocket of a Harijan. I would like the public to save their pice and give them to me for the sake of Harijans. It will be part payment of the heavy debt caste Hindus owe to Harijans.

Harijan, 1-12-1933

315. SCHOOL BOOKS

There seems to me to be no doubt that in the public schools the books used, especially for children, are for the most part useless when they are not harmful. That many of them are cleverly written cannot be denied. They might even be the best for the people and the environment for which they are written. But they are not written for Indian boys and girls, nor for the Indian environment. When they are so written, they are generally undigested imitations hardly answering the wants of the scholars. In this country, wants vary according to the provinces and the classes of children. For instance, wants of Harijan children are, in the beginning stages at least, different from those of the others.

I have, therefore, come to the conclusion that books are required more for the teachers than for the taught. And every teacher, if he is to do full justice to his pupils, will have to prepare the daily lesson from the material available to him. This, too, he will have to suit to the special requirements of his class.

Real education has to draw out the best from the boys and girls to be educated. This can never be done by packing ill-assorted and unwanted information into the heads of the pupils. It becomes a dead weight crushing all originality in them and turning them into mere automata. If we were not ourselves victims of the system, we would long ago have realized the mischief wrought by the modern method of giving mass education, especially in a case like India's.

Attempts have undoubtedly been made by many institutions to produce their own text-books with more or less success. But in my opinion they do not answer the vital needs of the country.

I lay no claim to originality for the views I have endeavoured to set forth here. They are repeated here for the benefit of the managers and teachers of Harijan schools, who have a tremendous task before them. They dare not be satisfied with mere mechanical work resulting in simply making the children under their charge indifferently and in a parrot-like manner learn the books chosen anyhow. They have undertaken a great trust which they must discharge courageously, intelligently and honestly.

The task is difficult enough but not so difficult as one would imagine, provided the teacher or the manager puts his whole heart into the work. If he becomes a parent to his pupils, he will instinctively know what they need and set about giving it to them. If he has it not to give, he will proceed to qualify himself. And seeing that we have started with the idea that the boys and girls have to have instruction in accordance with their wants, no extraordinary cleverness or possession of external knowledge is required in a teacher of Harijan and, for that matter, any other children.

And when it is remembered that the primary aim of all education is, or should be, the moulding of the character of pupils, a teacher who has a character to keep need not lose heart.

Harijan, 1-12-1933

316. A 'DOUBLE HELL'

A Harijan servant in Orissa gives me a graphic description of his visit to some Harijan quarters in Balasore District, near Bhadrak:[1]

Is it any wonder that we have malaria, plague, and cholera rampant in our midst? It is impossible to avoid these diseases so long as we neglect these useful members of society, consign them to the dirtiest places and, because of the monster of untouchability, we would not teach them to do their work in a proper and efficient manner. I suggest to workers all over the country that they must concentrate their effort upon the plague spots which they visit. Let us not be baffled by the vastness of the problem. Things will right themselves if everyone will attend to the work that comes his way. I would, therefore, advise the workers of Bhadrak to go to the merchants, make out a simple plan of improvement, present them with a budget, level up the ground, put up plinths and rebuild the fifteen houses. It cannot be a heavy budget and I doubt not that by sufficient importunity they will be able to raise a fund to reduce that plan to execution. The donors will find that the donations are a sound investment in a health-promoting project. It would be like putting their courtyards in order.

Harijan, 1-12-1933

[1] The letter is not reproduced here. The correspondent, describing the waterlogged, stinking Harijan quarters and referring to the article "Another Plague Spot" (*vide* p. 18), had written: "I have no doubt that if you could see this quarter . . . you would call it a 'double hell'."

317. LETTER TO VALLABHBHAI PATEL

ITARSI,
December 1, 1933

BHAISHRI VALLABHBHAI,

I am writing this letter at 3.15 a.m. in a dharmashala at Itarsi. Mirabehn has gone to wash her face. After that we will pray, and then leave immediately to catch the train to Kareli, from where we have to go to Anantpur. Jethalal[1] is working there. Yesterday we were at Betul, and from there we came here by train, held a meeting and slept in this dharmashala.

I got your letter. How much can we do to counter what is being done by *The Times of India*? Still I go on doing what I can think of. I get very few opportunities to read newspapers these days. I feel that the Harijan work is being indeed watched by Hari. The power that draws hundreds of thousands of people at every place [that we visit] will also expose the lies. If we remain careful enough and make no mistakes, we shall have done our duty.

I know very well that your spirit is following me in my tour. How do you know it is not protecting me? Didn't I see every moment in Yeravda that you feel a mother's love for me? The same love is visible in every line of your letters. And it is all-embracing. That is why you are carefully watching every day from there.

Please don't worry about me, nor about what is happening in the country. This is God's work. "Who can repair what has gone amiss, O Lord?"

We are in the train now. I take it that you will do whatever may be necessary regarding your nose.

Blessings from
BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro-2: Sardar Vallabhbhaine, pp. 49-50

[1] Jethalal Govindji Sampat. *Vide* "What I Saw in Anantpur", 15-12-1933.

318. REMARKS ON DHARMASHALA, ITARSI

December 1, 1933

We were given shelter in this dharmashala for which we are thankful to its managers. I was greatly pleased to learn that Harijans who observe rules of cleanliness are also admitted.

M. K. GANDHI

From a facsimile of the Hindi: *Madhya Pradesh aur Gandhiji*, p. 117

319. LETTER TO MARGARETE SPIEGEL

December 2, 1933

CHI. AMALA,

I have your letter. I call it good because it is truthful. I knew you were deceiving yourself and me. Will you now tell me what your nature demands? If it demands simply being in my presence, it cannot be satisfied. If it demands more teaching work and a life natural to most Europeans, I shall try to help you with hope of success. You should confer with Jamnalalji when he returns. Meanwhile do so with Dwarakanathji. You ought to be steady and brave. To desire to die is cowardice. There is nobody about you who has any wish to repress you. You have built in front of you a mountain of difficulties. Make your choice resolutely and act.

It is nearing 3.30 a.m. now. I get up always as usual, at 3 a.m. Just after washing I read your letter and began this. You must be wise and sure.

Love.

BAPU

Spiegel Papers. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

320. LETTER TO VIDYA A. HINGORANI

December 2, 1933

CHI. VIDYA,

I hope you are in good spirits. Do you go out for walks? What do you eat? Give up the craze for examinations; but do not give up the love for learning. Whatever time you can spare, devote it to improving your Hindi. Once you have mastered Hindi, turn to English. You may devote some time to English even now; but Hindi should have precedence. Did Dr. Choithram get my letter? Have you any information?

Blessings from
BAPU

From a microfilm of the Hindi: Courtesy: National Archives of India and Anand T. Hingorani

321. SPEECH AT SAGAR

December 2, 1933

It is a good omen to me and to my cause and service of Harijans that such a big rush of people has come for me. I believe that they really want to drive out this curse of untouchability from the Hindu society. All are equal in the eyes of God and they have equal right to use public wells, schools and temples. The present movement is directed towards self-purification and one should not think oneself high or low in one's estimation.

The form in which untouchability is practised in India is to be found in no other country and it does not find support in the code of Manu. I am not an atheist. I have fifty years of experience and have not observed such distinction.

Replying to a long letter received from sanatanists, he said he had not practised *adharma*. If he did so he would be guilty in the eyes of God and man alike.

Even if I am left alone, I will preach this very thing.

Continuing, he advised the audience not to insult or injure the sanatanists but to love them as a mother loves her child. He firmly believed that a day would soon come when the sanatanists also would be with him.

Turning to the Harijans, he advised them to cultivate habits of cleanliness and give up carrion-eating and to abstain from drink. He dwelt on the efficacy of prayer and advised the Harijans to pray every morning in Hindi, because no knowledge of Sanskrit was necessary for prayer. He recalled his own 50 years' experience and showed how God had relieved him in moments of difficulties. While going to the temples they should go after a bath and in clean dress.

The Bombay Chronicle, 8-12-1933

322. SPEECH AT PUBLIC MEETING, JABALPUR

December 3, 1933

If this effort to abolish root and branch the distinctions of high and low succeeds, it will have a healthy reaction on all spheres of life, and the struggle between capital and labour will cease and give place to co-operation and concord between the two.[1] If we have understood the full implications of this war against untouchability, we should have no difficulty in realizing that untouchability based on birth is only one of the countless phases of that curse. We should thus be better serving the cause of freedom and communal unity that I have at heart. My faith in the movement has grown from day to day. I implicitly believe that, if we succeed in abolishing untouchability from Hinduism, all the quarrels between classes and communities that we see today in India will cease. The differences between Hindus and Mussalmans and between capital and labour will be composed. Once the hearts are purified, it will be found easy to overcome all difficulties in the way of a heart unity. The phase we are at present dealing with does not exhaust all the possibilities of the struggle. The untouchability as practised today in Hinduism is the worst of all the phases. Masquerading under the name of religion, it has contributed most to the degradation of man by man. I have said that untouchability is a many-headed monster and appears in many shapes and forms, some of them so subtle as not to be easily detected. There are many degrees in untouchability. I was conscious of all these implications when I took up this war and made up my mind to devote my full energy, in the evening of my life, to this work.

[1] In an address presented by the local labour union, it was asked why Gandhiji did not work for ameliorating the condition of labourers and protecting them against exploitation by capitalists.

All true scouts have my blessings.[1] In my many wanderings over many parts of the world, I have come in contact with thousands of boy scouts. True scouts are brave, considerate, courteous, and intelligent. They should have a full sense of their duty. They have been working to preserve order at the numerous fairs in the country where millions gather. I would also like them to give a part of their time to the service of the Harijans. Anyone who sees Harijan quarters with my eye will be convinced that there is ample scope for service for all who have the will and the capacity to do it. It does not require extraordinary intelligence. The only thing required is a sense of identification with the Harijans.

There is no end of difficulties in the way, but there is not a single difficulty for which there is no remedy. The beauty of a religious movement lies in the fact that all difficulties blocking its progress are automatically solved. God himself clears the way. His is the guiding hand, we are but His instruments. If we gird up our loins to fight this age-old sin against God and man and observe fully the conditions laid down by Shastras and followed by sages of old and humbly seek Divine aid in our undertaking, we are sure to win the grace of God. These conditions require a thorough observance of truth and non-violence and the utmost sacrifices and sufferings. If we have all that and, above all, charity and goodwill for our opponents, the difficulties, howsoever great, will surely melt away.

Harijan, 15-12-1933

323. TELEGRAM TO BRIJKRISHNA CHANDIWALA

JABALPUR,
December 4, 1933

BRIJKRISHNA CHANDIWALA
KATRA KHUSHALRAI
CHANDNI CHOWK, DELHI

YOUR WIRE LETTER. AM CONSULTING ANSARI. GOD BLESS YOU. WIRING LATER. LOVE.

BAPU

From a photostat: G.N. 2403

[1] The National Boy Scouts had presented an address to Gandhiji.

324. *LETTER TO VALLABHBHAI PATEL*

JABALPUR,
December 4, 1933

BHAISHRI VALLABHBHAI,

We arrived at Jabalpur last evening. It is 6.30 just now. I got your letter yesterday in Katni. I saw the work being done at Anantpur. It is all solid, but for that very reason it is also slow. Jethalal is an extremely efficient worker.

Gordhanbhai is very much displeased with my conduct. I am of course trying to explain things to him. His idea is to spend the money in foreign countries. I have advised him against doing that. He has not consulted me yet regarding the will. If he does, I will naturally remember what you have said in your letter. The whole thing seems strange, but I wouldn't be surprised if what we hear were really true. Whatever it is, the truth will come out in time. The big guns are expected today. I see that all will meet tomorrow.[1] We shall be put up at different places. Aunt is coming. Ansari also may come.

Brijkrishna is on his death-bed. You know that during the fast he had looked after me with the utmost devotion. I keep myself informed about his condition. There is a wire from Dr. Ansari saying that there is a possibility that he may survive the crisis.

I learnt only from your letter that Mahadev had been given a companion[2]. Joshi is keeping very well. I heard about Ba only yesterday after we had arrived here. I am glad.

The Harijan work is progressing satisfactorily. So far everything may be said to have gone well.

Blessings to you both from
BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro–2: Sardar Vallabhbhaine, pp. 50-1

[1] An informal meeting of the Congress Working Committee was being held at Jabalpur.

[2] Girdhari, J. B. Kripalani's brother's son

325. LETTER TO GODAVARI

December 4, 1933

CHI. GODAVARI[1],

I am longing to see you ever since I arrived. Rajendra Singh[2] inquired in the morning and I sent a message [for you] to come at 8 o'clock, but you have every right to come whenever you wish.

Blessings from
BAPU

From Hindi: C.W. 9670

326. LETTER TO MARGARETE SPIEGEL

December 5, 1933

CHI. AMALA,

This is being written before morning prayer time. I have your further letter. You must not conceal things from me or act unnaturally to please me. That would be a wrong way to go about it. You will please me most by being quite natural. Your own room is quite untidy. You are not taking care of your finger. It is high time you got well. You should go to a hill, if you cannot be better there.

Love.

BAPU

Spiegel Papers. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

[1] Wife of Seth Govinddas, who had been accepted as daughter by Gandhiji in 1932

[2] Gandhiji's host at Jabalpur

327. SPEECH AT PUBLIC MEETING, MANDLA[1]

December 6, 1933

I have said that those who come to these gatherings as an appreciation of my political services and not because they believe in removal of untouchability deceive themselves and me. I invite only sympathizers and opponents to these meetings, the latter if they wish to signify their opposition. I want you to be true to yourselves and reject me if you do not see eye to eye with me in this matter.

There are two sets of pundits who give opposite interpretations of Shastras. The layman then has to make use of his God-given reason and choose between the two.[2] Untouchability, I have found, appeals neither to the intellect nor to the heart. The essential urge of the heart is towards compassion and sympathy for the sinner. Temples are meant for sinners, where they can wash away their sins. What is the use of temples to a liberated sinless soul, who sees God everywhere? If you believe that Harijans are in their present plight today as a result of their past sins, you must concede that they have the first right of worship in temples. God has been described by all the scriptures of the world as a Protector and Saviour of the sinner.

There is untouchability in the Shastras in a particular sense. Anger, lust and other evil passions raging in the heart are the real untouchables. It is a prostitution of Shastras to interpret them as sanctioning the distinctions we observe today. A true man of piety will consider himself a sinner and, therefore, untouchable. We in our haughtiness have hitherto misinterpreted the Shastras and have raised a sin to the status of a religious tenet. I claim to be a true sanatanist, because I make the greatest effort I can to live up to the truth as I see it. Diversity there certainly is in the world, but it means neither inequality nor

[1] Earlier, the meeting was addressed by a sanatanist Swami with Gandhiji's permission. The burden of his speech was that the large gatherings came to pay homage to Gandhiji as a political leader and not because they accepted his views on untouchability.

[2] In the address presented there was a reference to the debate between Shankara, the reformer, and Mandanmisra, the formalist, which took place in Mahishmati, the ancient seat of learning, now Mandla.

untouchability. An elephant and an ant are dissimilar. Nevertheless God has said that they are equal in His eyes. The inner oneness pervades all life. The forms are many, but the informing spirit is one. How can there be room for distinctions of high and low where there is this all-embracing fundamental unity underlying the outward diversity? For that is a fact meeting you at every step in daily life. The final goal of all religions is to realize this essential oneness.

Harijan, 15-12-1933

328. LETTER TO KASTURBA GANDHI

December 7, 1933

FOR SHRI KASTURBA GANDHI
FROM M. K. GANDHI BY KIND PERMISSION OF
SUPERINTENDENT, YERAVDA GAOL

BA,

You must have got the letter sent with Ranchhodbhai. Take care of your health. Do not worry about anything. You shouldn't go on thinking about things. Trust my life to God. Can there be any better protector than He? There has been no change in my food. Wherever I go, *pendas*[1] are kept ready for me. Generally I accept them, but sometimes I refuse. My personal needs are looked after by Mirabehn and Om. Mirabehn has only one thought day and night. She doesn't attend any meeting, but spends all her time in keeping things ready for me. She keeps well. I had got cold but I am better now. I am in Jabalpur today. Gopi's parents live here. I met them and her younger sister. Govinddas's house also is in this town. Brijkrishna is still seriously ill. Ask somebody to write to him. Prabhavati writes to me. Take proper care about your food. If you need anything, get it through Ranchhodbhai or Chimanlal. How is your mouth and the foot? Who are your companions? Write to me at the Wardha address. I hope all the women are in good health. Tell Amtussalaam that I have written a letter to her. Ask Mani to write to me. I hope she keeps good health.

Blessings from
BAPU

[From Gujarati]
Bapuna Bane Patro, pp. 1-2

[1] A sweetmeat

329. LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI

December 7, 1933

CHI. NARANDAS,

I have discussed with Harakhchand and Jivanlal the proposal for Purushottam's betrothal. They are eager to settle another connection and have pressed me not to enter into negotiations with any other party for the time being. Accordingly, I am doing nothing for the present. I feel sure that Harakhchand will offer his daughter. I think you also know this. I think about you every day. I hope all of you are well. As for myself, I am being protected by God.

Blessings to you all from
BAPU

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./I. Also C.W. 8393. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

330. LETTER TO BHAILAL M. PATEL

December 7, 1933

BHAI BHAILAL,

I got your letter. I am happy to learn that you have been doing Harijan work with single-minded devotion. May your devotion remain the same for ever and your work bear fruit.

Vandemataram from
MOHANDAS

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 3300

331. LETTER TO VALLABHBHAI PATEL

JABALPUR,
December 7, 1933

BHAISHRI VALLABHBHAI,

I had a very long letter from Gordhanbhai which of course I didn't preserve. He had pointed out in it all my shortcomings and contrasted them with Vithalbhai's virtues. I had returned a very loving reply to that letter. I have received no acknowledgment. As for the money[1] which is lying with me, he had sent me an oral message. I told Mathuradas in reply that I would not let it be used in foreign countries. You must have seen that he has now made a public appeal to me. We shall know the whole truth by and by. I hope to be able to manage the situation well enough. You needn't worry.

I will write regularly to Ba. This time she was not very willing to go to jail. But God will see that everything is all right. Thakkar Bapa had shown me your letter. It was not his fault at all. He tries hard indeed to save me from all inconvenience. He doesn't let any troublesome people come near me. He saves me from a great many things, but sometimes he is helpless. I am sure we shall learn from experience and things will keep improving. Don't worry about this either. "God's will be done."

Kishorelal is ill. He is a little better now. He is in Bombay. Write to him.

Jivraj's[2] health seems to have been affected very much. He is in Hotel Rugby in Matheran.

Mathuradas was in the crowd.[3] He is still with me. He will remain with me up to Delhi. His health also seems to have been affected. He suffers from backache. He cannot move freely. If he takes rest I think he will regain strength. It may be said that, at the meeting, they talked a little and then left. Maulana Saheb and the Doctor tried to persuade me not to be uncompromising. On my explaining my conflict of duties, they became silent.

[1] The reference is to the sum accumulated with Gandhiji from the monthly instalments of about half the salary that Vithalbhai used to draw as Speaker, Central Legislative Assembly.

[2] Dr. Jivraj Mehta

[3] He had attended the meeting of the Congress Working Committee.

The matter was discussed in minute detail. I felt that Nariman had no sense. I told them: "If somebody writes 'Whither India?' and another writes 'Whither Congress?', I hope it wouldn't seem too much if I write 'Whither Nariman?'." Jawahar is indeed a *jawahar*[1]. About Jamnalalji I needn't write anything. He has put on weight. His health is all right, more or less. Chikhalda benefited him very much. The condition of his ear is as bad as that of your nose. One is without nose, and the other is deaf. To whom may I complain about these difficulties? Please let me know, however, if the injections help you now. I like your idea of trying *neti*[2]. But who will teach you the method? I claim to be an expert in it. Can I not be called there as one? If you don't know the correct way, there may be a little bleeding. Generally a straw is used in the beginning. I would advise you not to do so. Fine cloth will suffice. If you do it slowly, there will be no difficulty. Krishnadas[3], Mahadev and Devdas were taught by me. Devdas used to bleed, but the reason for that was different. He had, therefore, to give up the practice.

Janakibehn had accompanied Jamnalal. The two left last evening.

I learnt only from you that Giridhari was placed with Mahadev. Surendra and Durbari[4] are at Wardha. Both of them are well. Madhavji[5] has just been released. He has come here to see me. He will leave for Karadi today. He is all right. Chandrashankar is doing full justice to his work. Kaka and Swami have gone to Matheran for four or five days.

I will reach Delhi on the 10th.

Blessings to both from
BAPU

[From Gujarati]
Bapuna Patro–2: Sardar Vallabhbhaine, pp. 51-3

[1] Literally, 'jewel'
[2] A yogic practice of cleaning the nasal canal
[3] Once Gandhiji's secretary
[4] A Parsi prohibition worker of Surat District
[5] Madhavji V. Thakkar

332. LETTER TO VIDYA A. HINGORANI

December 7, 1933

CHI. VIDYA,

I got your letter. When I advised you to give up inhibition[1] I meant that you should not hesitate to take what help you need from other brothers and sisters. One can get such help through heart-felt humility. If you can't get it, then do engage a maid-servant. The attempt should be gradually to do away with the practice of employing servants and do all work by ourselves; but this is possible only when your health improves. Do not think that I am asking you to do everything all at once. Do it as your strength permits.

Have you understood me now? Do write to me all details.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a microfilm of the Hindi. Courtesy: National Archives of India and Anand T. Hingorani

333. SPEECH AT LEONARD THEOLOGICAL COLLEGE

JABALPUR,
December 7, 1933

I, who believe in the equality of the great religions of the world and from my early days have learnt to honour other religions as my own, have no difficulty in inviting and taking the co-operation of the followers of other religions in this movement. It is part of my nature. This is essentially a matter of repentance on the part of the so-called higher classes. They have to do reparation for the wrongs they have hitherto done to a portion of themselves on whose backs they have hitherto ridden. It is an effort on the part of Hindu reformers to blot out this shame from the face of Hinduism. I have not hesitated to say that either untouchability lives and Hinduism perishes, or untouchability goes and Hinduism rises purified. It is a life-and-death struggle between the darkness of superstition and the light of reform. If this

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Vidya A. Hingorani", p. 287.

reform in Hinduism comes about, I have not the shadow of a doubt that it will be a service not only of all the communities of India but of the whole of humanity. I am not thinking of achieving this reform by any form of compulsion, including legal. It is said that, in trying to seek support for the two Bills now before the Assembly, I am really supporting a policy of legal compulsion. I do not want to repeat here the whole argument against that contention; but I want to assure you that there is no compulsion in the Bills; and those who care to study them will endorse my opinion. This must be a reform from within. It is not a political movement. I do not want to deny that it will have great political results, but I have never for a moment thought of achieving through this movement the political rise of the so-called upper class Hindus. It is to my mind a movement of downright purification.

Having made these introductory remarks, it is easy for me to tell you on what terms you can give your assistance to the movement. You should work in co-operation with and, if I may say it, in subordination to the Society that has been formed for suppression and eradication of untouchability, namely, the Servants of Untouchables Society. That is to say, you should put your talents at the disposal of the Society. I do not mean metallic talents. These have to come from those who have to make repentance and reparation. I have seen during the few days of my tour that millions are ready for the reform. They can tangibly signify their support only by giving their coppers. But men and women of intelligence are wanted to work for the Harijans in a variety of ways. For the so-called caste Hindus to serve the Harijans in a constructive manner is to get off their backs, to go down on their knees to them, to treat Harijan children as their own and Harijan men and women as blood-brothers and sisters. It is almost a superhuman task and cannot be done without Divine aid. But Divine aid comes largely through human agency. I confess that we have too few teachers and other professional men and women in our ranks. We want to cope with the ever increasing demand. I invite the aid of agencies like yours in this work. You will now understand what I mean by subordination. This is the right way.

But there is also the wrong way. You may choose to work independently. You may have the conversion of Harijans to Christianity. You may see in the movement a chance for propaganda. If you work among the Harijans with such an aim, you can see that the very end we have in view will be frustrated. If

you believe that Hinduism is a gift, not of God but of Satan, quite clearly you cannot accept my terms. You and I would be dishonest if we did not make clear to one another what we stand for.

Harijan, 15-12-1933

334. A LETTER

[Before *December 8, 1933*][1]

A public servant has no personal feelings to be considered. He must be a cypher. He can have no pride nor power nor prestige except such as service gives him. He must [be] तुल्यनिंदात्मसंस्तुतिः/ मानापमानयोस्तुल्यः[2]. Therefore, you may not be ruffled on my behalf or on behalf of the cause. The cause is not in your or my hands. It is in God's all-powerful hands. You and I are His instruments. You must rejoice in your humiliation and feel strong.

Harijan, 15-12-1933

335. LETTER TO F. MARY BARR

December 8, 1933

CHI. MARY,

We pass through Betul on 15th. I am quite sure that if I carried on a propaganda for selling puff powder you will find me deserted and pieless.

You are right about sword practice.

Love.

BAPU

From a photostat : G.N. 6016. Also C.W. 3342. Courtesy: F. Mary Barr

[1] This was published in a report date-lined "Harda, 8-12-1933".

[2] One "who is evenminded in praise and blame", who "holds alike respect and disrespect". *Bhagavad Gita*, XIV. 24-25; *vide* Vol. XXXII, p. 321.

336. *LETTER TO MARGARETE SPIEGEL*

December 7/9, 1933[1]

CHI. AMALA,

Your letter. My blood-pressure fluctuates between 155 and 168. Are you any the wiser for the information? Why should you bother about things you cannot understand! Ask me how I am and you will get the answer. Let technical matters be left to the doctors. I have told you that I am not going to drive you from the Ashram. If the life suits you and you can conform to the discipline, stay there by all means.

You must cook your own simple vegetable if the general thing contains condiments. Or you may ask Dwarakanathji to have plain boiled vegetable for you.

Ba is quite all right.

I hope you are eating fruit.

So you are teaching Sumitra English!

Love.

BAPU

[PS.]

You ought to come to the station on 15th. The finger should be all right.

BAPU

Spiegel Papers. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

[1] The letter was written on December 7 and the postscript on December 9.

337. LETTER TO KISAN GHUMATKAR

December 9, 1933

MY DEAR KISAN,

I had your letter today in the train. Unless you have already left, I suggest your joining the Madras Mail at Wardha on 15th instant. I take the Grand Trunk Mail at Delhi on 14th inst. I am glad you are strong both in body and mind.

Love.

BAPU

SHRIMATI KISANBEHN
GANESH TERRACE
GIRGAUM BACK RD.
BOMBAY

C.W. 9689

338. LETTER TO RUKMINIDEVI BAZAJ

December 9, 1933

CHI. RUKMINI,

I got your postcard. During a tour how can one get time to write letters? Even today I have got only a few minutes and am using them to write this. It is God's kindness that Devendra is growing so well. I hear occasionally from Radha. I have just heard that Santok's mother passed away.

I hope you get the *Harijan*.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 9155

339. LETTER TO NANABHAI I. MASHRUWALA

December 9, 1933

BHAI NANABHAI,

I got your letter. I have sent a wire to Vrajlalji. I hope Shanti is recovering. One wishes that the children were as careful about their health as they are about their studies. I had a letter from Gomati regarding Kishorelal. He is not likely to become completely healthy now. I also had a letter from Manilal and Sushila. I have written a long letter to them.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 6690. Also C.W. 4335. Courtesy: Kanubhai Mashruwala

340. LETTER TO MANU GANDHI

December 9, 1933

CHI. MANU,

It seems you have completely forgotten me. You don't even reply to me. Shouldn't you write at least about Kusum's health? How is she? I had a letter from Ba from jail. She is worrying about you and Kusum. Write to her. How are you? How is aunt Bali? I am writing this in a running train.

Blessings from
BAPU

[PS.]

Write to me at the Wardha address.

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C.W. 2663. Courtesy: Manubehn S. Mashruwala

341. SPEECH AT JAMIA MILLIA, DELHI

December 10, 1933

I have learnt enough Urdu while I was in jail and if I happen to go there again I shall come out as an Urdu scholar.

Islam enjoins upon us tolerance towards others' religions. It doesn't say that other religions are false. He alone who does good to others is a true man. This is the principle of the Koran as also the teaching of other religions. The students of the Jamia, I hope, will spread the message of unity and freedom throughout the country.

I do not propose to attend the Hindu-Muslim unity conference. I want unity of hearts among the followers of the two faiths so that Mother India may attain freedom.

[From Hindi]

Gandhijiki Dilli Diary, Vol. I, p. 357

342. SPEECH AT LABOURERS' MEETING[1]

DELHI,
December 10, 1933

[Gandhiji] congratulated the organizers of his programme on the happy beginning made with a visit to Harijan quarters and followed by the labourers' meeting.

Thanking them for the purse, the Mahatma said he knew that half the amount in the purse was contributed by the employer (Mr. G. D. Birla) and half by the labourers from the Labour Welfare Fund. To present such a big sum was the work of rich persons and not of labourers, and besides this, most of them were Harijans and it did not behove him to take money from them to remove the curse of untouchability. It was the duty of high-caste Hindus like Mr. Birla to contribute money to wipe out untouchability, and he hesitated to accept money from Harijans, but all the same he accepted it, since they volunteered it, but, added the Mahatma,

[1] About 5,000 labourers and others attended the meeting held in the Birla Mills. A purse of Rs. 2,000 and an address on a banana leaf were presented to Gandhiji. He remarked: "The idea of presenting the address on a banana leaf is very good, but you should have given me some fruit to eat." Soon after a basket of fruit was brought.

he would have preferred it if the Harijans had given up liquor or smoking and contributed those savings for Harijan work. The money thus contributed would have been more helpful in the noble mission. He recalled, in this connection, the contribution raised by Bhopal students yesterday by raising a pie-fund.

Continuing, the Mahatma said the Hindus, in patronizing the Harijan movement, were really doing a penance (*prayashchitta*) for their age-long sins, and this penance must be sincere. If they failed to do it, God alone knew what their fate would be.

Referring to the Harijan reform work done in the Birla Mills, Mahatmaji said:

It is no news to me that you have wiped out untouchability in the Birla Mills. Ghanshyamdasji has merely paid the debt that he owed as a high-caste Hindu to the Harijans and as a mill-owner to labourers.

It was the religious duty of every Hindu, be he a mill-owner or poor man, to root out untouchability from this land. In doing so, they were merely doing their duty and did not deserve any thanks.

Continuing, the Mahatma sounded a note of warning in the following words:

Wipe out untouchability or Hinduism will be wiped out from the world.

Referring to some sanatanists, who did not agree with him in this reform movement, Mahatmaji said:

I have tried my best to persuade sanatanists to my view and have given my best attention to their arguments, but they have failed to convince me by a single proof from the Shastras giving sanction to untouchability.

Continuing, the Mahatma appealed to the labourers to give up liquor, smoking and other evil practices and lead a pure life internally as well as externally. He laid stress on God's worship and added that faith in God alone could put an end to their sorrows. He concluded with a prayer for the welfare of labourers, saying that he also regarded himself as a labourer by choice. It was better to be a labourer than to be an employer. (Cheers)

The Mahatma humorously remarked:

I feel very much tempted to finish the fruit, but give it to Harijan children and they will reach me.

The Hindustan Times, 11-12-1933

343. DISCUSSION WITH HARIJANS

DELHI,
December 10, 1933

Q. Do you consider temple-entry as the only way to solve our troubles?

A. It is my firm belief that caste Hindus will not have fulfilled their obligations till they have opened all their temples to Harijans. It is immaterial to me whether Harijans come to worship in those temples or not. It is a matter of sheer justice and penance for caste Hindus. It is repugnant to my sense of justice that Harijans should be excluded from places of worship which are open to other Hindus. I would not consider untouchability as having been eradicated, unless and until the bar against Harjans' entry into temples is removed altogether.

Q. Will you not help us in our economic distress? To us economic uplift is the chief thing.

A. The economic uplift has not been overlooked. But I should not be satisfied if you were given crores of rupees and yet were still considered untouchables, or if palaces were built for you and you were still kept out of the pale of Hindu society. I should be satisfied only when you are put on a par with caste Hindus in every respect. Thus economic uplift is only one of the many items in our programme.

Q. We should not conceal from you our misgivings about the money collected by you being properly used for our welfare. It depends upon your getting honest workers to work out the scheme, of whom there are very few at present. Would you not then put the funds into our hands to be used according to our discretion? We must tell you frankly we do not trust the present workers.

A. I do not mean to say that no Harijans can take part in the disbursement of the funds. But as the whole reform is conceived as a matter of penance and reparation on the part of caste Hindus, they have to find the best way of using them. They must be guided by the advice of Harijans, but the actual administration of the funds has to rest with them. I may assure you that the least part of these funds will be spent for

propaganda. By far the greater part will go directly into the pockets of Harijans. I have no reason to believe that all those who are doing Harijan service today are actuated by selfish motives. There must be a few cases where workers are not as you and I would have them to be, but the majority have taken up this work in the proper spirit. Many of them are of unimpeachable character and would do credit to any movement. Apart from all this, however, I want you to visualize the conditions of thousands of Harijans who are so suppressed that they have fallen below the average standard of humanity. They are voiceless. They consider themselves sub-human. In Orissa, some years back,[1] an old man came to me with a straw in his mouth. I tried to awaken in him the sense that he was my equal as a human being. Another Harijan came to me in Cochin all trembling with fear. He was considered invisible in those parts and was afraid of coming into the world of touchables. These people are a standing reproach to us. In the work I am doing, I have these in mind. This service, then, has been taken up, not so much to please Harijans as to discharge a peremptory obligation. We want to wipe out our shame and to die in that effort if need be. We are striving to the best of our ability to render you selfless service, but if Harijans do not accept it, I shall know that we are too late. But the month's experience convinces me that the vast majority gladly accept this service. We do not wish to leave a single phase of your life untouched. We approach you as servants and not as patrons.

Q. You have only added a new name 'Harijan' to the many names we already had. Even this new name is significant of our separateness from the others. Unless this sense of separateness goes, in fact as well as in name, how are we to be satisfied?

A. The name 'Harijan' was suggested by one of your own class. Thousands have welcomed the name as a good substitute for the offensive names 'untouchable' and '*avarna*'. So long as untouchability is not completely removed, a name to distinguish you from others will be required, and an inoffensive name is any day better than one that stinks in the nostrils. When untouchability is gone and Harijans are merged into the Hindus, I do not know by what name—Harijan or Hindu—the whole community will choose to call itself, but till that day comes, distinguishing names will have to be used. You should know that I have be-

[1] In December 1927; *vide* Vol. XXXV, pp. 407-9.

come a Harijan by choice and am trying to serve you as one of yourselves; and I am sure that the service will, in the end, be accepted by all Harijans, if I have offered it in a selfless spirit. I would plead with you for a little more patience to see what is being done. The Harijan Sevak Sangh has no other end in view but your good.

Harijan, 22-12-1933

344. LETTER TO MANILAL AND SUSHILA GANDHI

DELHI,
December 11, 1933

CHI. MANILAL AND SUSHILA,

I got the letters of you both. Which remarks of mine hurt so much? I don't remember what I said to Kishorelal, but I have never thought you timid or cowardly. On the contrary, I have always been proud of your courage. But I do think that you are too dependent on others, that you do not have sufficient capacity to think for yourself. But that is not your fault. Partly it may be mine. You have nothing to feel ashamed about. I wrote a long letter to you by the last mail, from which you will be able to know clearly my views in this regard. Even your seeking my advice from here is a sign of your feeling of dependence.

If you make a mistake, I will not blame you even in my thoughts. I would do that if you betrayed the trust reposed in you. I do wish that you should keep the promises which you may have made to the people or to friends. I am not at all afraid of your present course. At the most the result would be your financial ruin. Let it be so. But don't let people think that you acted foolishly. If you feel that you have made a mistake, admit it and free yourself. It is not as easy for me to give advice in this matter as you seem to think. If it were so, why wouldn't I advise you immediately?

And now regarding your expenses. My remarks were not meant as criticism nor did they express my pain. I only wished to say that, having lived there in a certain manner, you could not easily change your mode of life here. I don't wish that you should try our manner of life here at the cost of the health of all three of you. You yourself have calculated your monthly requirement at Rs. 150. I have put it at Rs. 200. But now even Rs. 150 can be obtained only as a favour. I would rather that

you lived on plain fare than that you should depend on anybody's favour. In short I am not satisfied with your way of life. I know that Sushila is much more careful than you in this matter. After reading your letters, I even felt like sending a cable to you asking you not to worry. But with whose money would that have been? How can a poor father send a cable to reassure his son? I, therefore, content myself with this letter. Have no fear of me, either of you. Live as both of you may think proper. Even if you cannot continue to live there despite your sincere efforts and come over here, God will provide you means of livelihood. Do whatever you do after independent thinking.

Nimu is pregnant again. Ramdas feels extremely miserable. I have tried to comfort him. A man and a woman cannot succeed in this aim without hard effort. But Ramdas is a weak man and thinks too much, so that even his weakness makes him unhappy.

Probably you know that Lakshmi also is pregnant. I came to know these facts about both of them only recently. I come to know about such things only after some time. Ba is happy in jail. Manibehn is with her. I am all right.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 4812

345. *LETTER TO RAMABEHN JOSHI*

DELHI,
December 11, 1933

CHI. RAMA,

I will write a long letter to Joshi. It seems that Dhiru feels weak. If you write to him regularly, I think he will be all right. I am glad that he seems to like the place.

I feel greatly relieved to know that you are happy there. Work hard and serve well. Learn everything you can. Ask Vimu to write a letter to me.

I now get letters from Ba. Her going to jail seems to have pleased the women very much. Mani is still with her.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 5360

346. LETTER TO VIDYA R. PATEL

DELHI,
December 11, 1933

CHI. VIDYA,

I got your letter. It is good that you are under the special care of Ramabehn. Obey her. I have advised Dwarakanath that for some time you should be kept on milk, fruit and vegetables. That will improve your blood. You also require steam-baths and hip-baths. The eyes should be sprinkled with warm water four or five times daily. The water must be clean.

Blessnigs from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C.W. 9639. Courtesy: Ravindra R. Patel

347. NOTE TO VIDYA A. HINGORANI

BIRLA HOUSE,
NEW DELHI,
[*December 11, 1933*][1]

What is it you want? It is a matter of a few days. But I don't wish to keep you if that upsets you or makes you unhappy. After all, later on you have to go to Wardha. But if you want to go to Multan I would not stop you. I want to make you happy and brave somehow. If I send you back to Wardha, I will do so only after making all the arrangements, otherwise we shall see what can be done. I will not send you to Bhavnagar. Dudhibehn's programme is not certain. As long as I am here there is no such hurry. Shall talk tomorrow in the morning after my silence is over.

From a microfilm of the Hindi. Courtesy: National Archives of India and Anand T. Hingorani

[1] The source has "December 1934", which seems to be a slip. In December 1933, Gandhiji was in Delhi from 10th to 14th. And his silence day fell on the 11th. *Vide* also "Letter to Vidya A. Hingorani", 25-12-1933.

348. TELEGRAM TO BHULABHAI DESAI

NEW DELHI,
December 12, 1933

BHULABHAI DESAI
WARDEN R[OA]D, BOMBAY 11

JUST HEARD YOUR ARRIVAL. HOPE COMPLETELY CURED.

GANDHI

Bhulabhai Papers. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

349. LETTER TO KASTURBA GANDHI

DELHI,
December 12, 1933

BA,

This is the second letter to you in jail. I hope you are getting *Jam-e-Jamshed*[1] and *Harijanbandhu* now. Write to me if you want anything else. Mathuradas is still with me. I arrived in Delhi on the 10th. I shall be leaving for Andhradesh on the 14th and Mathuradas will go to Bombay. Do not worry about me in the least. I will write to you regularly and tell you exactly how I am keeping. I take milk, *mavo*, etc., in sufficient quantity. The cold which I had has disappeared. Dr. Ansari is here. I am staying this time with Ghanshyamdasji. Jamnalalji also is likely to arrive here today. Prabhudas and his wife also are here. He will settle and take up some work somewhere on this side. Do not worry about Manilal. I have written to him a long letter. I don't wish to suppress him. Santok's mother has passed away. I have written a letter to her today. Brijkrishna is seriously ill. He is confined to bed. He is being treated by Dr. Ansari. They are hopeful that he will get all right. Radha seems to have fallen ill again. If you or any other women want anything, write to me about it.

I hope your jaws are functioning all right. How is Mani's knee? Have you with you anything to read?

Blessings from
BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Bane Patro, p. 2

[1] A Gujarati daily published from Bombay

350. LETTER TO PRABHAVATI

DELHI,
December 12, 1933

CHI. PRABHAVATI,

I got your letter, as also Jayaprakash's. If both of you come to a firm decision that you would dedicate yourselves to service, I shall have nothing to say. I only explained to you both that it was not morally wrong to do one's duty towards one's own family, but that, if one wished to follow the path of service, one must renounce such private duties.[1]

If you try to do both, you will probably fail in both. There will be no difficulty in sending Rs. 50 every month for Rajeshwar[2]. But that does not satisfy me. What arrangement have you made for your own expenses? What have you decided regarding the debt? By solving these problems anyhow, you will not have solved the basic problem. But I will not dwell further on this matter. I don't wish to discourage Jayaprakash. We should hope that, since his motive is pure, everything will be all right.

You have not yet gone and seen Mother. You should do so now. Since your visit to me has been delayed so long, I shall now be far away. If you do not wish to get arrested there, you may come and see me during my Andhra tour, and then from Wardha you may go wherever you like. I think it would be best to go to Bihar. If you decide to go to Bihar, it is not very necessary for you to come and see me. If, however, you are very keen to come, by all means do come. I leave it entirely to your own wish. I shall be in Madras on 20, 21 and 22. I will start from here on the 14th. From the 16th to the 19th, I shall be around Bezwada. I shall be back in Andhra from 23rd to 31st, and the headquarters will be at Bezwada. You may now decide as you like.

Vidya felt bored and has come here. She has brought Kanta with her. I have not decided yet whether to let Vidya go to Multan or ask her to return to Wardha.

Om has been with me. I continue the same diet. The quantity of milk varies from three pounds to one pound. The

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Prabhavati", pp. 266-7.

[2] Younger brother of Jayaprakash Narayan

cold which I had has gone. The weight was 108 pounds when I was weighed in Jabalpur. I have not been weighed after that. You need not worry about me at all. God will keep me in whatever condition He wishes and get work done through me as He wills.

Could you see Rajendrababu? Did you see Father? How is he?

I hear from Ba from time to time. Mani is still with her. Sushila, Pyarelal's sister, is here. Her mother also is here. I have not met her yet.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 3436

351. LETTER TO KANTI GANDHI

DELHI,
December 13, 1933

CHI. KANTI[1],

I hear that your teeth have become infected. But generally I feel satisfied with the reports I hear about you. I assume that you will get this letter. I often think of you. Somanji wrote to me about you and your companions and said that you had read and studied well. My tour is a difficult one, but it is progressing satisfactorily. People come to the meetings in large numbers.

I am sure you know that Ramibehn's Kusum is ill. Radha is ill again. So far I have been able to bear the strain of the tour.

Blessings to all from
BAPU

From Gujarati: C.W. 7284. Courtesy: Kanti Gandhi

[1] Son of Harilal Gandhi

352. DISCUSSION WITH SANATANISTS

DELHI,
December 13, 1933

I claim to be a sanatanist as I consider my conduct to be in consonance with the spirit of the scriptures.[1] You may, if you like, reject my claim. I have studied the Shastras to the best of my ability and have arrived at the conclusion that untouchability is repugnant to the spirit of Hinduism.

They, however, contended that no one could be called sanatanist who did not believe in untouchability, *shraddha*, idol-worship and other outward observances. Gandhiji retorted that the only true test of sanatan dharma was the touchstone of truth. He added that the outward observance was nothing if a man lived a crooked life. What did outward form avail to a man who was a drunkard, rake and gambler?

When he was told that the attempt to have temples opened to Harijans was bound to lead to bloodshed, he said that was practically impossible, as there was no compulsion contemplated by anybody. No temple was to be opened where the overwhelming opinion of temple-goers was not in favour of such opening.

Harijan, 22-12-1933

353. SPEECH AT PUBLIC MEETING, ALIPUR

December 13, 1933

I would ask you to believe me when I say that there is no political motive behind my Harijan work. The political consequences of the removal of untouchability have no attraction for me. Indeed, I believe that, if we approached this question witn a political motive, we should fail to serve the Harijans and we should damage Hinduism. That real removal of untouchability will have political consequences is true enough. A duty religiously performed carries with it many other important consequences. 'Seek ye first the Kingdom of God and everything else will be added unto you', is to my mind a scientific truth.

[1] The sanatanists had contended that Gandhiji had no right to call himself a sanatanist.

I must remind you of the pledge given last year in your name. You will remember that a meeting of representatives of Hinduism was held in Bombay in September last year, Pandit Malaviyaji being in the chair. Among other things they resolved that untouchability, being a blot on the Hindu religion, had to be removed and that Harijans were entitled to the same public utilities, and in the same manner, as caste Hindus. There was in that Resolution a special reference to Hindu temples, and legislation was contemplated if it was found to be necessary for attaining the end. It is, therefore, the bounden duty of every caste Hindu to fulfil the pledge by throwing open to the Harijans temples, wells and other institutions precisely on the same terms as they are open to caste Hindus.

The Hindustan Times, 14-12-1933

354. DISCUSSION AT SERVANTS OF UNTOUCHABLES SOCIETY MEETING[1]

DELHI,
December 13, 1933

Regarding the utilization of collections made during the tour Mahatma Gandhi said that 75 per cent of these collections would be spent in the locality concerned so far as possible provided a suitable scheme was prepared and approved by the Central Board. The Provincial Boards should, however, not neglect their ordinary collections in the hope of getting money out of his collections. He stressed:

You dare not utilize any part of these collections for propaganda or office administration. They can be utilized to the single pie for constructive work alone. I am not touring India to finance your offices or to help your propaganda but to raise money enough for constructive work alone. You should collect money separately to meet the expenses of your office administration. If you do work out of the funds that I raise, the money paid by the public would be returned to them hundredfold. It should, therefore, be zealously guarded and cautiously spent.

Asked as to what opinion he could express about the work done so far, Mahatma Gandhi replied:

You cannot get any compliments if you want to get them. But I can say that you could have done the work much better

[1] Gandhiji had addressed the Central Board of the Society.

and as for the future I can only say that you should do better than in the past.

Regarding the question of democratization of the constitution of the Society, Mahatma Gandhi said that the present constitution should be worked democratically rather than bringing in a constitution democratic in form but autocratic in spirit.

His Holiness Garmuria Gosain of Assam and Mr. D. N. Sharma explained that ex-tea-garden coolies belonged to various provinces of India and were mostly Harijans. Their population in Assam was 10,50,000 out of whom only 5,000 were literate. They were commonly addicted to liquor or other such vices. They had been economically exploited by Kabulis and Marwaris.

Mahatma Gandhi said that he knew about this deplorable state.

It is a social problem but to me it seems that the harvest is ready but the labourers are few. We require workers to solve this question. It cannot be solved by law. It requires work in the midst of these people from day to day without expectation of immediate result. It would be better to prepare statistics of these men by provinces so that a way might be found out to invite workers from other provinces to go there and work. Money alone will not give the kind of workers required. If I succeed in reaching Assam I will study the conditions and try to raise some local workers. If I fail in this, I would have no doubt that Assam is the most backward of all provinces. The question is, however, not only of untouchability but of a different type, but if Assam produces the proper type of workers there will be no difficulty in getting funds enough for carrying on that work.

The Hindustan Times, 16-12-1933

355. SPEECH AT STUDENTS' MEETING, DELHI[1]

December 13, 1933

It is no exaggeration to say that our relations were as intimate as between blood-brothers.[2] His burning patriotism, his great sacrifice and his unsurpassable love for his children, whom also he gave to the service of the motherland, ought to be as patent to you as they were to me. I had the good fortune to be in the closest touch with him ever since I first knew him up to the moment of his death; and I could see that every moment of his life his thoughts were given to the nation he served so singularly.

[1] The meeting was held in the Hindu College.

[2] Gandhiji had unveiled a portrait of Motilal Nehru.

To him swaraj was no distant dream; it was his very life-breath. His hankering after freedom grew in intensity from day to day. It is, therefore, in the fitness of things that you should have before your eyes the portrait of such a great patriot, so that you may be constantly reminded of his sterling qualities and try to assimilate them in your own lives. No lip homage paid to a patriot you admire will be of any use to you, if you do not mean to imitate the virtues that made him great. Your keeping his portrait before you must be significant of your resolve to follow in his footsteps. Remember, too, that he was above all distinctions of high and low. He never gave a place to untouchability in his long and varied life. He had the heart of a prince. He knew how to earn as well as to give away.

He then asked the students to give a more tangible proof than money of their love for the Harijans by clearing the Augean stables, in other words, the Harijan *bastis* of Delhi. He had seen the terrible contrast between the palaces of New Delhi, where money had been poured out like water, and the veritable hells in which the Harijans were forced to live; and he spoke with an agony too deep for words.

I saw three *bastis* out of four, one of them being the worst of all. One cannot imagine, unless one has seen with one's own eyes, that there can be such a place for human habitation. I have no words to describe the filth and ugliness I saw there. It is enough to give one a feeling of nausea. You should gird up your loins and clean these plague-spots. I was happy to learn that there are among you students who have a desire to serve the Harijans by physical labour also. When you have removed the filth from the *bastis*, you will discover many other ways of most useful service.

Harijan, 22-12-1933

356. STATEMENT TO THE PRESS

DELHI,
Wednesday, December 13, 1933

I have just read Sir Mohammed Iqbal's answer[1] to Shri Jawaharlal Nehru's indictment[2] of the communal spirit whether among Muslims or Hindus in so far as they may be represented by their sectarian organizations. Reluctant though I am to inter-

[1] *Vide* Appendix II.

[2] For extracts from Jawaharlal Nehru's statement, *vide* Appendix III.

vene in the controversy, I may not leave unchallenged the statements made by Sir Mohammed Iqbal regarding me.

My position in London[1] was clear. I was helpless for effective action on communal matters without Dr. Ansari. I was bound by the Congress mandate and before I could recommend any modification I should need Dr. Ansari's guidance. Having forfeited, for the time being, Maulana Shaukat Ali's confidence, I told Muslim friends that Dr. Ansari held 'my conscience on Muslim matters in his pocket' and that therefore they should co-operate with me in securing his presence at the Conference. To this they would not agree, unless I would first accept their demands. My effort having failed, I tried every other resource at my disposal to achieve real unity and hopelessly failed.

The offer to act as camp-followers to the Congress seemed then, as it has proved since, to be a mockery. Behind the talks, there was an oppressive sense of unreality. What Sir Mohammed Iqbal calls two conditions attached to my personal acceptance of Muslim demands, were no conditions but the necessary consequence of my acceptance. Political unity was desired for a political end which for me, as for any Indian be he Hindu, Muslim, Christian or any other, could only be complete national independence in the fullest sense of the term. Muslim demands were presented for arriving at common action. Muslim friends in London were playing other minorities against the vital national interest. If they accepted me as their ally, as I offered to be in uttermost sincerity, my alliance could only be for combating every force that was inimical to India's freedom. It was, therefore, necessary to fight the spirit of separateness, no matter from what source it arose.

No Muslim had defended separate electorates as a thing good in itself. Even in their case, Muslim friends had admitted it as a necessary evil to be tolerated for a temporary period. The doctrine, therefore, did not admit of indefinite extension. The demand put forth on behalf of the so-called untouchables was clearly anti-national. But if it was consistent with national interest or was necessary for the protection of the Harijan interest, my resistance was truly inhuman as Sir Mohammed Iqbal characterizes it. But in that case, Muslim friends should not even have offered to be neutral if I accepted their demands. But I hold that my resistance was not only not 'inhuman' but it was conceived in the best interests of the Harijans.

[1] At the Round Table Conference in 1931; *vide* Vol. XLVIII.

I claim to be a Harijan by choice. I do not yield to the tallest Harijan in the desire to conserve the Harijan interest. Evidently Sir Mohammed Iqbal has had no time to follow what I have done or am doing in this behalf. Had he even cursorily followed my doings, he would not have allowed himself to say, as he has said, that "Mr. Gandhi has made it a mission of his life to prevent the fusion of the untouchables with the other communities and to retain them in the fold of Hinduism without any real fusion between them and even the caste Hindus." He should know that the rooting out of untouchability is the aim of my life which I have pursued without interruption for the past fifty years and that I have claimed and am fighting for the same rights without reservation for the Harijans that the caste Hindus have in matters religious, social and political.

My work about Harijans is purely religious. It has no political motive behind it. It is essentially humanitarian in the highest sense of the term. It is a movement of internal reform in Hinduism. It is one of expiation and reparation by caste Hindus for inhumanities heaped upon the outcastes of Hindu society. My Hinduism, like my nationalism, is not exclusive or inconsistent with the interest of any portion of humanity. I would refuse to call that freedom which may involve the sacrifice of Muslim or any other interest that is not hostile to the freedom of India. I approached every question in London in that spirit.

My belief in the necessity of communal unity is just as firm as ever before. What could I do now, it may be asked. My position is the same now as before. I would accept any solution that may commend itself to the Muslims as a whole and that is not in conflict with any other national interest. Naturally, I endorse the suggestion made by Shri Jawaharlal Nehru. Nothing can be fairer. As a nationalist I claim to represent all communities equally, the largest as well as the smallest.

The Hindustan Times, 14-12-1933

357. SPEECH AT HARIJANS' MEETING, DELHI[1]

December 14, 1933

It is not to keep you segregated that the schools are being opened and wells are being dug for you. All this is being done because I cannot bear to see you get no water at all. How can I tolerate that the Harijans get water from the same trough from which dogs and cattle drink water? You belong to the cities and perhaps get water from the taps. But in villages, the caste Hindus are so arrogant that they do not permit the Harijans to go near the wells at all. Even when they give them water, they do so from a distance and with words of abuse. You and I ought not to tolerate such a thing. Wells are being dug for Harijans not to keep them as untouchables, but in order that they may at least get clean water. And these wells are not exclusively for the Harijans. Others too can draw water from them. But the Harijans have a right to use them. They ought not to have to take water from a trough. The fact is, we have not been able to dig as many wells for them as are needed. And you also see that many caste Hindus are voluntarily opening their wells for the use of Harijans. The same is true about schools. Our efforts to get Harijans admitted to the general schools are continuing. But till such time as we can get Harijans admitted into all general schools, the question is whether we should open separate schools for them or let their children remain without education. That is why we are opening schools for them. Other children also are welcome to join these schools. But the Harijans at any rate have the fullest right to join them.

By calling you Harijans, we have given you a sweet name in place of an offensive one. Many Harijans have accepted it. It is a better name than the offensive word "untouchable". And the name was suggested by a Harijan. It at least avoids the discourtesy involved in addressing somebody by an offensive name. When untouchability has disappeared, either all Hindus would call themselves 'Harijans' or the Harijans would be completely absorbed in the Hindu society. The third alternative is that the

[1] The address presented by the Harijans of Shraddhananda Nagari suggested that separate wells, temples and schools should not be opened for Harijans as this would mean their separation from the Hindu fold.

Hindu community itself would be wiped out. But it is to avert this danger that a great effort is being made today. That is the work being carried on by the Harijan Sevak Sangh for the eradication of untouchability.

I am happy that I have come to the Shraddhananda Colony. Is there any Hindu who is unfamiliar with the name of the late Shraddhanandaji? There can hardly be anyone who feels the love and kindness for Harijans which Shraddhanandaji did. He was extremely unhappy that the Hindus in their arrogance had created a class of untouchables. The Hindu community will have to wash away that sin or perish. You should help in washing off that sin. Take this message to other Harijans, too. Contribute your mite to this *yajna* of self-purification which is being carried on. Maintain both outer and inner purity. Give up eating carrion and beef. These three things you must definitely do. The fourth thing is that you must give up liquor. Give it up even if other Hindus drink. You have been degraded by others and you have to rise by your own efforts. That is why I appeal to you to give up liquor. Please do this much and persuade other Harijans also to do it. You have presented a purse to me. But I do not want a single pie from the Harijans. It is we who have to give to you. We owe you a debt. However, I have accepted the purse since you have given it. The sum would be returned to you many times over. It is, however, not necessary for you to give anything.

[From Gujarati]
Harijanbandhu, 24-12-1933

358. SPEECH AT WOMEN'S MEETING, DELHI

December 14, 1933

In the eyes of God who is the Creator of all, His creatures are all equal. Had He made any distinctions of high and low between man and man, they would have been visible as are the distinctions between, say, an elephant and an ant. But he has endowed all human beings impartially with the same shape and the same natural wants. If you consider Harijans untouchables because they perform sanitary service, what mother has not performed such service for her children? Does she then become an untouchable on that score? As she can become pure after a wash, sweepers also can come under the same rule.[1] It is the height of in-

[1] These two sentences are from *The Hindustan Times*, 15-12-1933.

justice to consider the Harijans, who are the most useful servants of society, as untouchables and outcastes. I have undertaken this tour to awaken the minds of Hindu sisters to a sense of this sin. It can never be an act of merit to look down upon any human being as inferior to us. We are all worshippers of one God, whom we worship under different names. We must, therefore, realize our essential unity and give up untouchability as well as the spirit of superiority and inferiority between human beings.

Harijan, 22-12-1933

359. WHAT I SAW IN ANANTPUR

Anantpur is a little village in Saugor District, C. P. (Hindi), containing 177 houses with a population, therefore, roughly of 885. It is 35 miles from the nearest railway station. It has no Post or Telegraph Office. There is a weekly service from the nearest Post Office, Relly, 12 miles from Anantpur. It is a typically poor village of poor India. The villagers are occupied not more than four months in the year. There was hardly any supplementary occupation for the villagers as a whole before an event that happened four years ago.

It was in 1929 that a young man, with a single-minded zeal rarely surpassed, chose Anantpur for his experiment, after a year's travelling in search of such a village. He is khaddar mad. He believes in the message of khaddar even as much as perhaps I do. I doubt if he would not replace 'perhaps' by 'if not more than'. I would submit to his correction, if he made it. His faith in himself would put to shame the tallest among us. He believes that the only permanent cure for the enforced idleness of the peasantry of India and their consequent chronic poverty is the universal adoption of the spinning-wheel. His name is Jethalal Govindjee. He does not know English. He is no Gujarati scholar. Himself a town-bred man, by dogged pertinacity he has inured himself to the hardships of village life and lives like, and in the midst of, villagers. He has three companions with him. He is a thorough believer in one thing at a time and, therefore, will not pursue other social service, no matter how tempting it may be. If the spinning-wheel is well-established in every cottage, he thinks that all the other problems that puzzle and drag down villagers will solve themselves. He will say: 'I shan't preach temperance or thrift to the villager, for no drunkard will take to the wheel if he will not give up his drink, and to preach thrift to a pauper is

a mockery. It will be time to preach it, when I have put a few coppers in his pocket. Since I believe that every revolution of the wheel will mean a revolution in his daily life, I am going to be patient with his vices and many drawbacks. And I have faith that, if I am a clean man, my cleanness cannot but touch both the inside and the outside of the villager.' With varying fortunes, but with an unvarying faith, he and his companions have plodded for the past four years. Their formula is Self-dependence writ large. Khadi must support itself. The way to make it do so is for the villagers to spin, and weave too if possible, for their own use. They may sell only the surplus, as they do with the grain they grow. No cloth can be cheaper than that spun and woven in one's home, even as no bread can be cheaper than home-baked from grain grown in one's own field and ground in one's own home. The business of these servants of the villagers is merely to instruct and help. They visit every cottage and offer to teach them ginning, spinning, carding, weaving and dyeing. They improve their wheels and manufacture new ones for sale only from the material available in the village. This has given extra work to the village carpenter and the village blacksmith. Every item is well thought out. They have an almost complete record of the condition of every cottage and its dwellers. They have made a fairly accurate study of the villagers' wants and woes, customs and manners, and have published their report in Hindi. Their workshop is a busy hive. Work is being done in a neat and methodical manner. A common log-book is kept containing a day-to-day summary of the work done by each worker. I have mentioned only four foundation workers. Needless to say they have raised workers in seventeen villages they are serving within a five-mile radius of Anantpur.

A word as to the condition of the cottages I saw. I visited over six, including one belonging to a Harijan. I may not omit to mention that the Harijans have been found to be the readiest to take to the message.

The cottages I saw were low roofed, with walls made of mud. There was no ventilation in them worth mentioning, no boxes, hardly any metal pots. The inmates were in rags, except where they had made khaddar for themselves. The only belonging I saw consisted generally of empty mud granaries to contain grain for the year. One room served as kitchen, dwelling and the rest. Their beds were straw covered with rags, again except where they had woven khaddar for themselves. Their food consists of *jowar* chapatis and a pulse, with or without oil. Of milk and ghee

they hardly ever have anything. The Chamar whose cottage I saw was an exception. He sported two cows. Whether he or his children ever get a drop of milk for themselves is another story. The villagers were poorly fed and worse clothed. Some children go stark naked from year's end to year's end. They warm themselves in the sun by day and before a wretched fire at night. There are families in Anantpur who, I am told, started this khaddar industry literally with an investment of one pice for cotton. This was doubled the next day by the sale of yarn spun from one pice worth of cotton and thus by progressive realization they are able now to have their own clothes.

I translate the following from the leaflet prepared for the occasion of my visit:

The following is the cost of the complete outfit:

Ginning machine	Rs.	0-7-0
Carding bow with gut and striker	,,	0-9-6
Spinning-wheel with spindle	,,	0-6-6
Winding frame	,,	0-1-0
Handloom for 32 inches width with all accessories	,,	3-0-0
Total	,,	4-8-0

We serve seventeen villages lying within a five-mile radius, containing 1,100 cottages with a population of 5,500 in round numbers. As a result of our labours, eighty per cent of the population have learnt spinning, sixty per cent have learnt carding.

Over hundred persons have learnt weaving.

The average strength of yarn has now reached fifty-six, the average count ten.

Their average working days are hundred and twenty during the year, the balance of the time lying quite idle. Of the idle hours, now an individual gives on an average five hundred hours during the year to khaddar work. Our ideal is to reach 1,600 hours per year.

The progress of our work now depends upon our ability to raise more workers. We have today three principal workers, three assistants, five sub-assistants, five helpers and four candidates.

Our average monthly expense is Rs. 325 found by the All-India Spinners' Association.

I bring this great experiment to the notice of the public to show not only what it means to Harijans but also to all villagers. The aim of the experiment is not exclusively Harijan service, it is service of the under-fed and the under-clothed, exclusively through the spinning-wheel. I have known nothing simpler, cheaper and yet more effective than this experiment of village uplift through khaddar. The progress seems to be undoubtedly slow just now, but I expect that it will be found to be the quickest in the end.

Harijan, 15-12-1933

360. THINGS TO REMEMBER

During the past month of touring there has been a great deal of waste of time, a great deal of anxiety to the organizers and a great and unnecessary strain on my very limited physical resources, owing to the mad rush made towards the passing car. I cannot recall occasions when people near me have not trodden on my naked toes or scratched my legs. God has saved me from serious injury hitherto. But the crowds can take no credit for the immunity. Their affection is mad. And madness can do nobody any good. The thing can be easily managed if the volunteers will act in a business-like manner and will not themselves, like the crowds, go mad as they often do. People cannot be instructed on anything all of a sudden. Leaflets containing detailed instructions should, therefore, be issued to the public and read and explained to them by volunteers as they come to the venue of meetings. The very best arrangement of the kind was made at Harda. Although the party was taken through a crowded and decorated bazaar, it took no more than ten minutes to pass through. In other places the same distance has often taken more than half an hour. Success at Harda was due not merely to previous preparations, but also to volunteers with one continuous rope held by them being posted at regular intervals, thus making it impossible for anyone to break through the lines. Let me now without further comment tabulate the instructions which I suggest for general adoption.

(1) Leaflets containing detailed instructions should be issued to the villagers in simple language easily to be understood by them. These should be read to the parties as they stream in from villages.

(2) Crowds that gather at stations awaiting my arrival should stand in rows upon rows without causing inconvenience to

the passengers and without moving from their places when the train steams in.

(3) A few minutes before the arrival time, volunteers should be posted in front of the crowd with a continuous rope, held waist-high in their hands in order to avoid the people behind unconsciously moving towards me and the train.

(4) Volunteers should on no account fall prostrate before me.

(5) Volunteers should never lead or take part in the various cries. Apart from its interfering with efficient service, their leading or participating in them robs the cries of spontaneity.

(6) Volunteers should not shout their instructions to the public, but should pronounce them with deliberation and gentleness. Only one volunteer detailed for the purpose should pronounce them.

(7) The public should be requested not to crowd round the cars.

(8) Volunteers should not board my or any other car, except when asked to do so by a responsible member of the Reception Committee.

(9) The public should not gather at the stations which I may be passing through between 8 p.m. and 6 a.m., and in no case should they shout the usual cries at night. Such shouting during night betrays want of consideration for the passengers and the party whom they profess to respect.

(10) Those who gather at stations whether by day or night would do well to remember that I am not conducting a tour for receiving addresses. It is intended to be wholly a call for self-purification, an invitation to the so-called high class Hindus to repent of the wrong done by them to Harijans and for making collections on behalf of the cause. Therefore, those who gather at the stations are naturally expected to bring individual or collective donations for Harijan service.

Harijan, 15-12-1933

361. LETTER TO AGATHA HARRISON

Unrevised *December 15, 1933*

MY DEAR AGATHA,

I am writing this in a moving train in the early morning. Mira is just now off writing regular mail letters. She cannot combine nursing, cooking, bottle-washing, proof-reading for *Harijan* and European and American correspondence, without breaking to pieces.

Your letters are valuable.

What you say about Bhulabhai Desai's work does not surprise. I had expected nothing less.

As to the imaginary interview in Rome, of course, I never saw the reaffirmation by the Rome pressman[1]. I was in prison. But if I see the first statement and the reaffirmation, I would be able to throw light on it. That those who won't believe will receive no help is only too true. But that does not matter. I must satisfy honest doubters. The quickest way for you is for yourself or some friend to secure the *Times* file and copy the two statements and send them on to me before 3rd August next[2]. Long enough notice for you!

It will be a good thing if your effort results in Bose being allowed to go to England. Why he is kept out [of] London I cannot understand.

The usual cuttings accompany this. The orthodox opposition to the reform is slowly getting out of the bewilderment in which the phenomenal mass attendances at the meetings found it. Though they are very few so far as I can judge they have money to sustain them. They are therefore trying to create disturbances at meetings. But I hope to be able to cope with the opposition.

The political situation remains much the same as before. The official mind is revealed in the speech of the Commissioner of Burdwan.

Love.

BAPU

From a photostat: G.N. 1476

[1] Signor Gayda; *vide* Vol. XLVIII, pp. 426-7, also Vol. LVII, "Letter to Sir Samuel Hoare", 6-3-1934.

[2] The date on which Gandhiji's term of imprisonment would have expired; *vide* Vol. LV, p. 425.

362. LETTER TO HORACE G. ALEXANDER

December 15, 1933

MY DEAR HORACE,

Agatha has sent me your letter to her about that imaginary interview in Rome. It is wonderful how journalism has become degraded. Thank God the bulk of mankind remains unaffected even by the most widely read newspapers. But this reflection in no way absolves me from having to deal with the particular allegation. If Agatha can trace the two statements of the Rome journalist, I can deal with the matter at once.

I hope both you and Olive[1] are keeping well.

Love to you all.

BAPU

From a photostat: G.N. 1422

363. LETTER TO MARGARETE SPIEGEL

December 15, 1933

CHI. AMALA,

I was disappointed not to see you.[2] I wrote in answer to your fear that I would *not*[3] drive you out. You must compose yourself and live and think and speak naturally. If you love me, you cannot fear me.

I have no blood-pressure. Do write.

Love.

BAPU

Spiegel Papers. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

[1] Addressee's wife

[2] *Vide* "Letter to Margarete Spiegel", p. 312.

[3] This is underlined in the source.

364. LETTER TO ESTHER MENON

December 15, 1933

MY DEAR CHILD,

I had your touching letter. Well, you have to rejoice in your suffering both mental and physical. You must now do what satisfies your own inner voice. And the end will be all right. Of course Maria[1] will be cut up. But we are all in God's hands, not a blade moves but by His command. If we had all our own ways, the world will go to pieces. It is perhaps as well that our wishes are often frustrated. It is the test of our loyalty to God that we believe in Him even when He refuses to fulfil our wishes. I want you therefore to enjoy perfect peace even while things seem to you to be all going wrong.

My prayer, my thoughts and my love are with you. For the rest weekly *Harijan* is my weekly letter to you as to many friends and companions.

BAPU

From a photostat No. 123. Courtesy: Natioanl Archives of India. Also *My Dear Child*, p. 102

365. LETTER TO J. S. HOYLAND

December 15, 1933

MY DEAR HOYLAND,

You asked me some time ago, whether you could publish those hymns. Of course you can, provided that you give me no credit for the composition. You may say in the introduction that I had prepared a rough translation for the use of English friends but principally for Mira and that you had worked upon the translation.[2]

I receive your postcards lovingly signed by so many friends. I know that my work finds a place in your silent prayer meetings.

Love to you all.

BAPU

From a photostat: C.W. 4510. Courtesy: Woodbrooke College, Birmingham, and Jessie Hoyland

[1] Anne Marie Petersen

[2] *Vide* Vol. XLIV, footnote 2, p. 386.

366. LETTER TO MAHALAKSHMI M. THAKKAR

WARDHA,
December 15, 1933

CHI. MAHALAKSHMI,

Do not worry about the children. Nor about Madhavji.

I have had a discussion about the children. If Madhavji wants to do what seems to him his dharma, don't stand in his way. If you wish to come and see me you may come wherever I am.

Blessings to all sisters from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 6824

367. DISCUSSION WITH A SANATANIST[1]

[Before *December 16, 1933*]

You should realize that there are *shastris* who claim to be sanatanists and who support the reformers' contention. How am I to reject their testimony as false? They fortify me in my opinion that untouchability has no sanction in the Shastras. I do believe in the Vedas, the Upanishads, the *Smritis* and the Puranas. But to me the *Gita* is the key to a knowledge of the Shastras. It enunciates the principles on which all conduct must be based. It sums up the whole of the Shastras and, therefore, absolves laymen from having to explore the other books. But I go a step further. The Vedas are not the four books known as such. They contain only fragments of the originals. Eternal truth cannot be buried in or confined to printed books. The Vedas are, therefore, indefinable and unwritten. They reside in one's heart. And our Shastras tell us what discipline and study are necessary for opening out the heart for receiving the truth. One's experience, therefore, must be the final guide. The written word undoubtedly helps, but even that has to be interpreted

[1] Who met Gandhiji on the way to Vijayawada, formerly known as Bezwada. Gandhiji reached there on December 16.

and, when there are conflicting interpretations, the seeker is the final arbiter. I had to make my choice. Years ago I made it and came to the conclusion that the Shastras did not countenance untouchability as we practise it today.

Harijan, 22-12-1933

368. *SPEECH AT HARIJAN WORKERS' MEETING*

VIJAYAWADA,
December 16, 1933

It gave him great pleasure, [Gandhiji] said, to have met them all and witnessed the evidences of their literary powers. He had always known, he said, that the people of Andhradesha were good at composing poems and rendering them sweetly and as such he could not help feeling that the recitations witnessed that evening were to some extent useless. Poetry and art should be the vehicle of truth and never be utilized for flattery. For, such a use of poetry would not only make for degeneration of the art but would also be a violation of truth. Now that they were all engaged in a movement for the purification of Hinduism, he expected everyone so engaged to tread the path of truth. He had great expectations of Andhradesha and he knew she could rise equal to them.[1]

Be you caste Hindu or Harijan, let what contribution you are making to the Harijan cause be absolutely unalloyed. There can be no room for selfishness, hypocrisy, untruth and violence in such a movement. As a religious movement it ought to touch the hearts of Harijans and *savarnas* alike. For hundreds of years considerations of high and low have gone deep into our hearts. Religious weapons alone kill untouchability.

An array of Hindu saints and sages have taught us that penance was the only way to protect and purify religion. Needless to say that there can be no place for selfishness and egoism in a penance. I hope and pray that those engaged in Harijan service will be guided by the purest of motives.[2]

He appealed to all those *savarnas* and *avarnas* who were engaged in this work to realize the paramount importance of self-purification and to look upon this work as a *shuddhiyajna*.[3]

Mr. Shambu Sastri asked if Gandhiji accepted the authority of the Vedas.

Most certainly.

[1] What follows is from *The Bombay Chronicle*.
[2] What follows is from *The Hindu*.
[3] Gandhiji then invited questions from those present.

You respect them and abide by them?

Certainly.

The next question was whether he would accept the position that Harijans if admitted to temples should also abide by the injunctions of Shastras by which temples were regulated.

All Shastric rules that apply to *savarnas* when observed by Harijans must enable them to get entry into temples.[1]

All my past and present actions have been in accordance with religion as I have understood it. I have no doubt that the present endeavour for the removal of untouchability has Vedic authority behind it. I must, however, admit that there are two schools of thought on this question. Both claim to be sanatanists and base their opinions on the Hindu scriptures.

I hold that those who are conducting this drive against untouchability as a religious movement must treat their opponents with tolerance, give them always a dispassionate and patient hearing and in no case show any anger in word or deed. We are out to convert them. Let us seek their help and co-operation too. I implicitly believe that they will one day join us if only we worked with scrupulous care in a religious spirit. Our hearts should be full of love for them and if we are pure we are sure to win their hearts.

The Hindu, 17-12-1933, and *The Bombay Chronicle*, 20-12-1933

369. SPEECH AT PUBLIC MEETING, VIJAYAWADA

December 16, 1933

After apologizing for his inability to make himself heard by them all, Gandhiji acknowledged with thanks the several addresses presented to him and their monetary accompaniments.

But would it not have been better if all the purses had been pooled into one? We could have saved several precious minutes thereby but it is our misfortune that it was not done. People wish to present addresses and purses each in his own name or in the name of his village, although all of us belong to the same country and are in the same condition.

Proceeding, Gandhiji stated that so far Bezwada had contributed in cash about Rs. 3,982-8-0 and he was sure that before he left them, the figure

[1] What follows is from *The Bombay Chronicle.*

would be rounded off into Rs. 5,000. This he knew would not be a great thing for the town to do. In this connection he could not help feeling the absence of Messrs A. Kaleswara Rao and Pattabhi Sitaramayya. But, they must pursue their path of duty and not drop Harijan work which had now become widespread and was an important item of work. Unless they destroyed the evil of untouchability, Hinduism, he feared, would die out. It was not dharma to consider a fellowman an "untouchable". Harijans must have all rights that *savarnas* enjoyed. They had committed a great sin by having kept Harijans out of their rights all these ages. *Savarnas* must, therefore, he said, expiate for the sin by undergoing a *prayashchitta*. Wherever he had gone on this tour he had witnessed huge concourses of people at similar meetings and he took it as a mark of their approval of the work he was carrying on. That people contributed their mite also pleased him. To the Harijans he would appeal for support not in monetary shape but in co-operating in this *shuddhiyajna* by observing external and internal purity. Internal purity could be attained by thinking of God and Ramanama and external purity through bath and other means of clean living. He would appeal to such of the Harijans as were addicted to drink, and eating carrion and cow-flesh, to give up these. No one who was addicted to these could be considered to be a Hindu and he could not be admitted into temples. Drinking was a heinous sin and a man under its influence could not distinguish between mother and wife.

Before concluding, he referred to the address presented on behalf of the Andhra Hindi Pracharakas' Association and said that he was immensely gratified to see the work carried on in Dakshina Bharat for promoting Hindi. He was also glad to note that in this matter Andhra led the rest of South India. He appealed to them all to help in the propagation of Hindi as it was an effective means of serving their country and their nation.

The Hindu, 17-12-1933

370. SPEECH AT MUDUNURU

December 17, 1933

Addressing the gathering, Gandhiji expressed his regret at not being able to stay in their midst longer than a few minutes or go into the temples for want of time and also the difficulty of getting out of and into the car at every place. He wished to save as much time as possible as he had to cover a number of villages. If, therefore, he did not enter the temples, let them not go under the impression that he did not wish to enter the shrines of God. He was sure that the work he was doing was His work. He wished to open as many of the temples in this country as possible to Harijans. He hoped that Harijans would offer worship at the temples daily along with their other Hindu

brethren observing all the regulations that applied to *savarnas* and all the rules of cleanliness. By so doing and by giving up (where they were addicted to the habits) drink and carrion or beef-eating Harijans would be promoting real purification of Hinduism.[1]

The Hindu, 18-12-1933

371. INTERVIEW TO "THE HINDU"[2]

SIDDHANTHAM,
December 17, 1933

May I ask a few questions on some points that strike me as worthy of being brought to your notice?

[GANDHIJI:] Most certainly, I am ready. Go ahead.

In a recent meeting which he addressed in Madras Mr. M. K. Acharya has stated that 95 per cent of the Harijans do not want 'the Gandhian creed'. What is your view on the matter?

I do not know what 'the Gandhian creed' is. If I do not know it, how do the Harijans know it or Mr. Acharya himself? I do not claim anything special to me. There is no such thing as 'Gandhian creed' so far as I know. I know only this. I am engaged in giving Harijans clean water. I am engaged in giving them facilities for education. I am engaged in finding accommodation for them in public caravanserais where they cannot get it. I am engaged in weaning them from drink and carrion. Do they not like all these? I am engaged in teaching them the elementary rules of hygiene. Do they not want it? I am engaged in telling them what the fundamentals of Hinduism are and in having public temples thrown open to them. Mark the distinction. They may not want to enter these temples and if somebody said that they do not want to, I will not be able to prove conclusively to the contrary, though the *prima facie* evidence that I have is all in my favour. Whenever they find temples are thrown open to them, they are simply delirious with joy, as I found them to be today when I opened two temples[3] and entered them with them. I do not care whether they want to go to the temples or no. I simply feel that *savarnas* should do their duty. There is nothing 'Gandhian' about it. Every Hindu who believes that untouchability must go must understand this work.

[1] Gandhiji then declared open to Harijans two temples.
[2] Its special correspondent met Gandhiji in the afternoon.
[3] *Vide* the preceding item.

It was observed by another person that Gandhiji being a believer in varnashrama, which was but a graded system of untouchability, he was not qualified to tackle this problem. What do you think of this view?

For me varnashrama does not mean a graded system of untouchability. I have explained what I mean by varnadharma. It does not mean to me grades at all. It is not a vertical division. It is a horizontal one. In my view, all varnas stand absolutely on the same plane, i.e., of equality. Hence there can be no question of untouchability. Varnadharma is a mighty economic law which, if we subscribe to it, would save us from the catastrophe that is in store for the world. I have sufficient warrant in Hindu scriptures for saying that Brahmins and scavengers are absolutely on a par in the eyes of God.

It has been suggested in some quarters that the Harijan movement is a form of civil resistance propaganda and that by this tour you are promoting civil resistance. What is your opinion on this suggestion?

Then I am between two crossfires. Congressmen accuse me of having damaged the cause of civil disobedience by taking up this whirlwind campaign. Those who suspect me of ulterior motives accuse me of strengthening civil disobedience. I am unmoved by these charges or insinuations, and can only re-declare that I have absolutely no ulterior motive. It is a peremptory religious call which I am obeying. The tens of thousands who attend the meetings do not even hear the expression 'civil resistance' from my lips. This is purely a religious revival. This does not mean that I have changed my views on civil resistance. The very science of civil resistance demands absolute honesty. If I use this campaign for furthering civil resistance, I should be guilty of dishonesty. Civil disobedience does not need such dubious aids.

What do you think of the progress of Harijan uplift work in the provinces you have toured so far?

My impressions are altogether happy and, if they are continued in the other provinces, I would have no hesitation in saying that untouchability is fast dying out. On no other basis can I account for the tens of thousands of people who flock to the meetings and give me their coppers, well knowing what these are to be used for.

The Hindu, 18-12-1933

372. SPEECH AT MASULIPATAM

December 17, 1933

Replying to the addresses and acknowledging the purses and other presents, Gandhiji said that on reaching Masulipatam his first thought was of Dr. Pattabhi Sitaramayya. He was sure the Doctor's spirit was pervading at the meeting though he was not physically present in their midst. He thanked the District and Taluk Boards and the people of the district for the work they were doing on behalf of the Harijans. But he felt that so long as there was even a single temple which admitted *savarnas* but remained closed to Harijans, which benefited the former but did not equally benefit the latter, there would be no rest for him nor should there be any for them. If distinctions of high and low, touchable and untouchable continued amongst Hindus, he was sure Hinduism would slowly die out.[1]

We shall dig our own grave if we do not purge ourselves of this curse of untouchability, we shall have to pay with bitter tears if we in our pride miss the God-given opportunity today. We should have no peace till this monster is buried and those whom we have hitherto kept under our heels are put on a par with us in every respect. Let us awake to the sense of this sin and save, before it is too late, ourselves and our religion from going to perdition.

The Hindu, 18-12-1933, and *Harijan*, 29-12-1933

373. LETTER TO NARAHARI D. PARIKH

AS AT WARDHA,
December 19, 1933

CHI. NARAHARI,

I am starting to write this letter at six in the morning in Masulipatam. I get up daily at three and try to write as many letters as I can. The writing is interrupted at six, and at seven generally travelling is resumed. On Mondays and Tuesdays there is no travelling. Today is Tuesday, and so I have been able to continue to write. (After I had written so far, Malkani and Bapi Needu came up and took half an hour of my time.)

[1] The following is from *Harijan*, 29-12-1933.

I had preserved your long letter. Your work seems to be going on very well. I hope it will continue in the same manner. There are ebbs and tides in Mahadev's work. He loudly sings "All days are not alike". (Another interruption, and I gave 20 more minutes to Venkatappayya.) Mahadev is now realizing the truth of that line in his own experience. That is how all of us learn and grow.

Anandi and others are fairly well settled. Proper arrangements have been made for their study. Ramanama also is being taught by Shankarbhai and a music teacher. I get letters from Vanamala and Mohan. Mani has joined them. Bablo also is there, and so are Qureshi's children. N. has run away. Her son is in Sharda Mandir. Ba has been taken to Yeravda.

All the questions which you have asked regarding spinning are relevant. But those problems cannot be solved at present. I can't write about them now, either. I have in my mind the solutions of all the problems. Whether they will work or not can be discovered only when they are tried. If I am alive, I will explain them some day and, God willing, we will even try them.

Kaka's health is fairly good. He must have gone to Ahmedabad now. He was happy to stay with Swami for a few days. I have not heard from him recently.

Kishorelal is quite ill. He is confined to bed.

What experiences of the tour should I describe? The crowds at the meetings are larger even than before and contribute generously to the fund.

Surendra and Durbari are at Wardha. They will probably go to Karadi now. Both are fairly well. A large number of girls have joined at Wardha and requests are still being received. Vinoba continues to live in the hamlet. Balkrishna cannot be described as enjoying normal health. The same is true about Chhotelal.

Blessings to all from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 9061

374. LETTER TO KASTURBA GANDHI

December 19, 1933

BA,

I got your letter today. The letter addressed to Sabarmati must have been received. I will continue to write to you regularly. I will write every Monday or Tuesday, for on those two days I get some free time. Take care of your health. I will send the slivers. If I don't have any extra stock with me, I will get them from some source and send you. I have been having some blood pressure. I was examined by Dr. Ansari in Delhi. Do not at all worry about me. I will surely write to Manilal and Sushila every fortnight. I wrote to them long letters. I will send your blessings to everyone. Do not worry about anybody. I have written to Manu also regarding Kusum. The latter is really ill and may or may not survive. Kishorelal has been having fever intermittently. He is in bed. Brijkrishna also has been bed-ridden for a long time. Devdas is well, and so also Rajaji. Give my blessings to all the women there. I hope all of them are doing physical work and maintaining good health. Ramanama is an unfailing remedy. I had prepared an abridged *Gita* for Ramdas. It is being printed. When it is ready, I will send a few copies there. If you want anything else, write to me. Address your letters always to Wardha. I hope you are supplied newspapers. You have asked for a discourse from me. I will not send one this time. I will see if I can do so next week. It is certainly very good that you read the *Gita* regularly. Who teaches you to read it? What food do you get there? You remember, don't you, that you can write to Premlilabehn[1] or Trivedi[2] for anything that you may want. You will have fewer visitors there and so the best course will be that you should write one letter to me and receive one from me every week. However, you may do as you like. Om is all right. Premabehn's friend, Kisan, has joined

[1] Premlila Thackersey

[2] Prof. Jayashankar P. Trivedi of Agriculture College, Poona

me recently. You remember her, don't you? She is very hard-working and has been well educated.

Blessings from
BAPU

[From Gujarati]
Bapuna Bane Patro, pp. 2-3

375. LETTER TO AMRITLAL V. THAKKAR

MASULIPATAM,
December 19, 1933

BHAI THAKKAR BAPA,

The accompanying letters are for your information. Bhagwanji's argument is perfectly correct. I will write to him a suitable reply. Such activities will certainly be undertaken.

I have still not received a copy of the resolution passed by you. Shouldn't you send me one formally? I shall be able to know about my duties from its wording.

The work here is progressing rapidly. Malkani is fast becoming an accountant. He has also become a newspaper correspondent. If he maintains good health, he will work to the best of his ability.

The crowds at the meetings are as large and the contributions as generous as in the C.P.

I have still not been able to observe the four-hour rule. Nobody, however, is to blame for that. Such a rule can only be an ideal. In any case, God will ordain everything as He wills. I learnt as long ago as my young days to live according to Mira's *bhajan*:

> Hari has tied me with a slender thread,
> I let Him pull as He wills.

I, therefore, don't experience any difficulty. He who enables us to sit and to walk may also put us to sleep.

I should like you or Ghanshyamdas to see the members of the Delhi Municipality about the quarters of Harijans in Delhi. They must be improved.

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 1134

376. LETTER TO PRABHAVATI

December 19, 1933

CHI. PRABHAVATI,

I got your letter written from Patna. Since you have started the injections, it would be better to complete the course. Perhaps you may benefit. I myself, though, have little faith in it. But once we have started a thing we should go to the end.

There will be no difficulty in sending Rs. 50 every month to Rajeshwar. I have discussed the matter.

I have already explained in my previous letter[1] about your coming to see me. If your health has deteriorated, won't you have to pay all your attention just now to proper treatment?

Do you experience any difficulty in seeing Rajendrababu?

I have not weighed myself recently, but my health is quite good. The blood pressure has returned to my normal. It is 158-109.

Om is fine. Kisan has joined me now. I am sure you know her. She is the woman who had started crying in Bombay. She is a close friend of Prema. She was also in jail with Mirabehn. She is a Maharashtrian, and is a highly educated lady. She is very eager to serve. She joined me at Wardha. Suman's place is taken by Ramnarayan[2].

Keep on writing to me.

Blessings from
BAPU

[PS.]

20-22, Madras

23-January 3, Andhra Desha, Headquarters Bezwada.

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 3437

[1] *Vide* pp. 323-4.

[2] Ramnarayan Chowdhary

377. LETTER TO VANAMALA N. PARIKH

December 19, 1933

CHI. VANAMALA,

Bravo! You have started signing in English now! After some time, I suppose you will even be able to detect mistakes in my English. I hope you are working hard enough to accustom your body to bear strain. What have you been studying? Ask Mohan to write to me. Sultana[1], Bablo, Hamid[2] and Vahid[3] also should write to me. Do you remember that you did not complete your letter?

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 5783. Also C.W. 3006. Courtesy: Vanamala Desai

378. LETTER TO BHAGWANJI P. PANDYA

December 19, 1933

CHI. BHAGWANJI,

I am late in replying to your letter, though I had intended to reply quite soon. What you have suggested is right. But carry out your idea tactfully and without using compulsion. Very few non-Harijans will join. For them the rule will be compulsory. For the Harijans, the problem will be one of education. You cannot use compulsion on them. They will gradually learn to use lavatories. In the locality where Ramji lives, we may certainly construct lavatories if it is possible to introduce them there. Parikshitlal, Juthabhai and you may discuss the matter and do what you think best.

Do not give up your interest in the Vadaj school. The number of children attending it should increase. Don't leave even the grown-ups. This will of course require patience on your part. Give up desire for the success of your work. Write to me from time to time.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a copy of the Gujarati: C.W. 364. Courtesy: Bhagwanji P. Pandya

[1], [2] & [3] Children of Gulam Rasul Qureshi

379. LETTER TO SHARDA C. SHAH

December 19, 1933

CHI. SHARDA *alias* SHARDAGAURI *alias* SHARDAKUMARI,

Why should not my letter to Anandi be considered as addressed to all of you? Supposing I write all the names in the same letter? Once you all have considered and made her your elder, how can you now complain? Which question of yours did I leave unanswered?

I am glad to hear that you are studying well. But what about your frequent illnesses? Does it mean that you go on forgetting as you go on learning?

What do you eat?

Blessings from
BAPU

From the Gujarati original: C.W. 9965. Courtesy: Shardabehn G. Chokhawala

380. LETTER TO VIMALCHANDRA V. DESAI

December 19, 1933

CHI. NANU,

I got your letter. Your handwritng still leaves much to be desired. If you realize that one should write every letter in a word as carefully as one draws a picture, you would take pains to write a beautiful hand.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C.W. 5757. Courtesy: Valji G. Desai

381. LETTER TO HEMPRABHA DAS GUPTA

December 19, 1933

CHI. HEMPRABHA,

Your letters are coming infrequently now. I do not worry as I have understood the reason. I hope that you at least have not been hurt over my Bengal tour. How is Arun[1]? And how are you keeping now?

So far my tour can be said to be proceeding very well. Moreover, God is giving me the energy for this hectic travelling.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 1705

382. LETTER TO BRIJKRISHNA AND RAMAKRISHNA CHANDIWALA

December 19, 1933

CHI. BRIJKRISHNA,

How is it that I have received so far no letter or wire? I hope that a suitable house has been found and your health is improving. Send me all the news. It will do if I get a post-card daily and a wire when necessary.

Blessings from
BAPU

BHAI RAMAKRISHNA OR SHRIKRISHNA,

Discussions should be avoided in the presence of Brijkrishna. Stick to Doctors Ansari and Sen.

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 2404

[1] Addressee's son

383. LETTER TO TOTARAM SANADHYA

December 19, 1933

BHAI TOTARAMJI,

I got your letter. I like the scheme. It must be implemented as far as possible.

I trust the children from Utkal give you satisfaction.

Hariprasad must be engrossed in service.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 2537

384. LETTER TO KALYANJI V. MEHTA

December 20, 1933

BHAI KALYANJI,

I got your letter. I am writing this reply in a running train. I did hear about you from time to time. I hope your health is good. You have been exercising good self-control in not coming to see me. We can't have any money to waste. How is Kunvarji? Napoleon has stopped writing to me now. Is Mithubehn all right now? How is the leg? Write to me from time to time.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 2710

385. REPLY TO CIVIC ADDRESS, MADRAS

December 20, 1933

MR. MAYOR, COUNCILLORS AND FRIENDS,

I deeply appreciate the honour you have done me this morning by presenting me for the second time with an address.[1] It is always a matter of great pleasure to me to visit the South because, as you know, I have relations with the South of a very long standing. I came in closest touch with the indentured Indian people in Natal as early as 1893 and some of you may recollect that my first contact in Natal was not only with the South Indians but with the Tamil Indians, and the very first case of distress that I had the good fortune to handle was one in connection with a Tamil[2]. Ever since that the South has bound me with ties not to be surpassed by any other part of India.

You, Sir, may not know, but some of the Councillors and some of the other citizens will perhaps recall the fact that when I first had the honour of receiving an address at the hands of this great Corporation, among the several names that I registered for myself was that of an expert scavenger. It was at that time that I referred to the condition of your public streets and how those streets were used for insanitary purposes, even by men who should know better. I expect that there has been a vast improvement in that direction. But today my mission of scavenging is of a special character, a deeper character and, as I found it, of a purely religious character, taking religion in its broadest sense, not in the narrow sectional sense in which we, at the present day, unfortunately use the term.

The reform I am aiming at today concerns a body of scavengers belonging to the Hindu society and does not make it none the less religious in the broadest sense of the term. I feel that it is a deeply humanitarian mission to which I have not hesitated to invite the co-operation of non-Hindus within, necessarily, the limits that I had the pleasure of mentioning before a body of mis-

[1] The Corporation had presented an address to Gandhiji on March 7, 1925; *vide* Vol. XXVI, pp. 240-2.

[2] Balasundaram; *vide* Vol. XXXIX, pp. 126-7.

sionaries, I believe in Jubalpore.[1] As days advance, you will understand what this scavenging mission stands for. It stands for abolishing the distinctions of high and low which untouchability undoubtedly means; but you will not expect that, on my entering the Tamil land, I should give an elaborate view of what I consider is the duty of the Hindu humanity towards those useful servants of society. That I must reserve for another occasion.

Be it enough for the present, Mr. Mayor and Councillors, for me to thank you once more for the address that you have been good enough to present to me. I hope that I will carry with me throughout my tour your sincere prayers in the mission that I have undertaken.

The Hindu, 20-12-1933

386. SPEECH AT ALL-INDIA SWADESHI EXHIBITION[2] MADRAS

December 20, 1933

MR. PRESIDENT AND FRIENDS,

I have started out in Madras under happy and good auspices. I had the honour of receiving an address from the Corporation and now I have the honour of receiving another address from the Southern Indian Chamber of Commerce at the hands of my friend Mr. Jamal Sahib[3]. I have the pleasantest recollection of the long conversations with him in London not more than 18 months ago or something like that. We discussed then things of interest common to the whole of India and now I find myself again in his company. With your blessings, friends, I look forward to the success of my mission in Madras and later on in the whole of Tamil Nadu.

You have, Sir, asked me to declare the Swadeshi Exhibition open. All of you may not be aware that I am a man who thinks and chooses things. I regard myself somewhat as an expert in matters of swadeshi. I have been instrumental also in organizing more than one exhibition of this kind in India. You cannot have everything that grows or is manufactured in India exhibited. You will naturally have to make a definite choice in things if you

[1] *Vide* "Speech at Leonard Theological College", pp. 309-11.

[2] Gandhiji opened an exhibition organized by the Madras Mahajan Sabha in the morning.

[3] Jamal Mahomed

are to make an exhibition of this character of educative value for the public. For instance, you would not exhibit any seeds that grow in India like grass. You have to pick and choose those seeds and grains which you want to introduce to the public. I have given, friends, only an illustration out of many that crowd my memory now. I have spoken about this in order to introduce to you a very delicate thing.

I do not accept invitations to open all and every swadeshi exhibition. I want to know whether the delicate wines produced in India are exhibited also. If they are, naturally, the fanatical prohibitionist that I am, I will say to you: 'Thank you, but I cannot open this exhibition, where wines, which are harmful to the moral and economic well-being of the country, sparkling though they may be, are exhibited.' Not equally on the same lines, but somewhat on those lines, I object also to open exhibitions where mill-cloths, maybe hundred per cent swadeshi, are exhibited. I do not say it is injurious in the same sense that wines are. But if I am expected to open an exhibition of manufactured mill-cloths—and not things made in cottages in India—you will make a very poor show. I do not want to pit myself against mill-cloth. What I want to say is this. If you go into the history of the mill industry in India, you will discover it does not need a swadeshi exhibition for its distribution. The mills themselves are their own swadeshi exhibition. They have got all the facilities of their own. But what of khadi?

I do not want to say I have opened a swadeshi exhibition where all sorts of things are exhibited. It must be an exhibition, not only for your edification but of instruction to those to whom it should be useful. I have opened exhibitions in other places and I have been asked to open in a very big city like this a swadeshi exhibition. I had therefore to introduce this word of caution. Now, do you or do you not think of the various needs of the Harijans? As you know, I am under a self-imposed vow, during seven or eight months that remain for me, to do some kind of propaganda work for Harijans. I have restricted myself predominantly to do Harijan work and no other work. I can talk to many people on varied subjects and there is no end to the varied subjects that do or can interest me. At the present moment, I propose to confine myself to the few things that are necessary for the Harijan cause.

What can a swadeshi exhibition do for Harijans, you may ask. I think khadi has got a great deal to do with it, because the introduction of hand-spinning and hand-weaving of cloth, you will

be surprised to know, has brought a ray of comfort and light into the dark homes of thousands and thousands of Harijans. I had the good fortune to go to many Harijan homes even during this brief tour and discovered the potency of khadi for Harijans. You will also be surprised to know that there are many things—I hope those things are exhibited here—at which Harijans have worked for the most part, if not entirely. There is the leather industry. The leather industry will be nowhere in India but for the initial work which the Harijans put into it. You will not expect me to take you into the history of it; my friend, Jamal Sahib, will give you chapter and verse about it. But I can tell the history in terms of rupees, annas and pies. Not less than nine crore rupees worth of hides go out of India which, if we are to deal honourably by Harijans, will all be absorbed in India, or at least not leave the shores in the raw state in which the hides are now sent. I can multiply instances. But I do not want to detain you or detain myself.

I have great pleasure in declaring the Exhibition open and I hope you will take advantage of this Exhibition, make it of educative effect, interest yourself in these things that have been brought to the stalls and trace the history of their manufacture and then you will be surprised at the resources the poorest country in the world has at its disposal if we would only work at them intelligently and also work in co-operation with the downtrodden millions in India. If you would get off their backs and treat the Harijans, the Mahars and the other oppressed and depressed classes as our own comrades entitled to the same privileges and the same honour that we claim for ourselves, then in spite of the tremendous handicaps under which we are working this land of ours can become a land of plenty, a land of prosperity and not of downright pauperism in which the country now is.

I thank you for inviting me to open this Exhibition and I hope the public will generously patronize it.

The Hindu, 20-12-1933

387. *SPEECH AT WOMEN'S MEETING, MADRAS*

December 20, 1933

SISTERS,

It gives me great pleasure to be able to renew your acquaintance. This is not the first time that I am addressing a meeting of ladies in Madras. I have before me an extremely heavy programme to be gone through inside of forty minutes. Therefore you will excuse me for being very brief.

I have come here to ask you to do one thing. Forget altogether that some are high and some are low. Forget altogether that some are touchables and some are untouchables. I know that you all believe in God as I do, and God cannot be so cruel and unjust as to make distinctions of high and low between man and man and woman and woman. This untouchability is the greatest blot on Hinduism. And I have not hesitated to say that, if untouchability lives, Hinduism dies. If only to use man's language, God has been patient with us but I have no hesitation in saying that even God's patience can be exhausted, and He will no longer be patient with this atrocity that man is doing towards man in Hindu India.

Gandhiji made a break in his speech at this juncture and said:

You have not given me the purse.

Dr. Muthulakshmi Reddi immediately handed to Gandhiji the purse, saying that it contained cash to the extent of Rs. 430.

You have given me a lean purse. But lean or fat the purse is meant to serve Harijans.

Dr. Muthulakshmi Reddi said that many of them had contributed liberally to the purse that was going to be presented to Gandhiji at the public meeting at Tilak Ghat.

That is the excuse you want to give; all right, I see you are all for equality with men.

I regard this purse as token on the part of the donors of their desire to do some slight reparation to those whom we have injured in the name of religion.

Well, anyway, ladies have parted willingly with their jewellery, some with their rings, others with their bangles and necklaces and

so on and I invite you to do likewise, but on this understanding, that the jewellery you may part with is not to be replaced and that you should consider the giving as a privilege in connection with the Harijan movement. I conclude with a prayer to God Almighty that He may bless this effort and that He may so change your hearts that you will forget the distinctions between touchables and untouchables.

There is one thing which a sister wants me to say and which I gladly do, namely, to put in a word on behalf of Hindi. I expect that some of you would like to serve in other parts of India, in the northern parts of India. You cannot mix with the masses in the North unless you understand Hindi. Know that 22 crores of the people of India know and understand Hindi. Enlightened sisters of the South cannot neglect the language of the 22 crores.

Well, I have finished, and those who want to part with their jewellery can do so.

The Hindu, 20-12-1933

388. *SPEECH AT STUDENTS' MEETING, MADRAS*

December 20, 1933

STUDENTS AND FRIENDS,

You are not new to me nor am I new to you. I remember you well. In 1896 when, of course, many of you were not even born, I made the acquaintance of the students of Madras, when I was an unknown man to you or for that matter to anybody else except those who are called the 'coolies', that is to say, the people of Tamil Nadu. I was even at that time known somewhat amongst them, but I remember what a welcome you gave me at that time. I thank you for the purse that you have given me as also for the address you have presented to me. I do not need to argue with you, and to convince you that untouchability is the greatest blot on Hinduism. I do not need to convince you that after all the education you have received, if you believe in the distinction between man and man, all your education is worthless; but I do want you to realize, if you are convinced, as you state in your address you are convinced, that untouchability is an evil, which we should get rid of. I want you to serve the cause; I want you to serve the Harijans. I had expected you to say in your address in what way you had served them. When

I received an address from the students of Delhi, they told me in what way they were serving the Harijans of Delhi, and even the Harijans outside Delhi in the villages. I hope you will follow their example. They did not pretend that they had done wonders. They made some time ago an humble beginning. I wonder if you also had made an humble beginning—I wonder if you know how much you can do in order to ameliorate the conditions of Harijans and how much you can do by silent service to rid ourselves, our society, of this blot. The way to convince the society that untouchability cannot be a part of religion and that it is a hideous error is for you to develop character. You will show it in your own lives that to believe in some people being touchable and some untouchable is not only not religion, but it is the reverse of religion. Whereas, if you had no character to achieve or lose, naturally people are not going to put any faith whatsoever in you. You have got to move the masses. You have got to change the hearts of the masses. Never mind what the orthodox people who claim to have studied the scriptures may have to say; they do not represent the masses nor do they represent the real interpretation of the scriptures as I hold it. It may be that I am in error, but in any case there are a few people who react upon the masses, as you can also react upon the masses. I promise you that in the end only those who are working among the masses will be the deciding factor. Masses will not argue. They will simply want to know who are the men who go to them and tell them that untouchability in which they have believed for such a long time is an evil, and if they find that those who have approached them, and told them that untouchability is an evil have credentials, they will listen to them, and if they have no credentials they will not listen. This is an incredibly simple proposition that I have been putting before you which each one of you can test for yourself.

How can you serve these men, who are living in your midst? I have shown a way for the many students that I have addressed. Take a broom and a bucket in your hands, not by way of *tamasha*, not by way of a spectacle, but sincerely, and work with the broom and the bucket and clean out all those dirty places of Madras. Go in their midst and wean them from drink, teach them the elementary principles of hygiene and sanitation, to which most of them are utter strangers, be it said to our disgrace. Having considered that they were beneath our attention, that they were the lowest people on earth, untouchable, unseeable and unapproachable and so on, we had

come to the conclusion that we need not attend to them nor take care of what they were doing. They took us at our word and thought they were not human beings, and that they were hardly animals, and so they neglected themselves. They simply eked out a miserable existence. It is in the midst of these people that you have got to go, and bring to them a ray of light. I hope that you will go to these places, and bend your backs and work in their midst, and assure them that you are there not with any mental reservations, nor with any base motives, but with pure motives and serving them with the motive of taking the message of peace and love in their midst. If you will do that you will immediately find that their lives are transformed as also yours. I do not ask you to steal a single moment from the hours that you may need for your studies, but I ask you to utilize your idle moments, and I have no doubt that if each of you will examine yourself, you will find that every day you have so many idle moments. I do not ask you to give all your idle moments, but if you will combine and will serve the Harijans in Madras, you will find a revolution in their lives as also in your own lives. May God enable you to understand this! May God give you the strength to follow this message.

One thing more I have to tell you. I have lodged a complaint against the students of Madras, namely, that, although they claim to be part of India, and not particularly Madras, how can they neglect, especially I say to my sisters, the language that over 22 crores of Indians understand, namely, Hindi? You have got in Madras the Hindi Prachar Sabha giving you all the facilities to learn Hindi. I know that many students have taken advantage of the facilities, but I am sorry to tell you that that is not enough. I had expected that your address this time would be presented written in Hindi, and I had also expected that you would call upon me to speak in Hindi. But I had to give it up at once. I am now engaged in one mission and one mission alone and therefore without taking much of your time and of my time on a discourse on Hindi, I began with the burden of my subject. I close with this warning that when you begin to take upon your shoulders the burden of the country, you will find what a great handicap you are labouring under if you do not know Hindi or Hindustani. I thank you once more.

In conclusion, Mahatmaji said that he hoped that the students would relieve him of the burden of the address. He would auction the same. As no bidders were forthcoming, Mahatmaji said that ladies could also bid giving their jewels. He was willing to give away the address for a pair of bangles

or a ring. Thereupon two ladies in the gathering sent up one bangle each. Miss Swaminathan gave away a pair and took away the address.

The Hindu, 21-12-1933

389. SPEECH AT WOMEN'S MEETING, MADRAS[1]

December 20, 1933

DEAR SISTERS,

The Reception Committee of the Harijan Sevak Sangh has left very few minutes for me; hence eager though I am to make your acquaintance more fully than I can during the few minutes, I must restrain myself and run away from you after saying a few words. It gives me great joy to know that many of you are Harijan sisters. If any demonstration was needed, this very meeting is an ocular demonstration; but for the knowledge that some of you are Harijan sisters I at least should not know which are Harijans and which are not. It shows that untouchability cannot be a God-appointed institution. It is an institution appointed by man at his worst. And it is for *savarna* Hindu men and women to rise in revolt against that institution and blot it out. It, therefore, gives me pleasure to receive for the Harijan cause this little purse from the Mothers' Association.

But I want to say one word now to the Harijan sisters. I want them and I want the menfolk among Harijans to play their part nobly in this movement of self-purification. There are three or four things which undoubtedly demand attention. One thing is the observance of the elementary laws of sanitation, purification of the body. Those laws you should conform to. Then there is the question of carrion-eating and beef-eating and I know some Harijans take to these evil habits. These two things must be given up. The fourth thing is not special to Harijans because many so-called high-class Hindus also indulge in the bad habit that I am about to mention. And that is the drink evil. No matter what the so-called high-class Hindus may or may not do, you, at least, should tell the menfolk; and if you are also given to that habit then you yourself give up that habit altogether. Having worked for the last 50 years amongst the poor people and amongst those who are given to drink, I know what I am talking about. I

[1] Addresses on behalf of the Mothers' Association and the Harijan women were presented to Gandhiji.

saw in Natal, in South Africa, our own sisters dead drunk and wallowing in the gutters. When they were dead drunk, they did not know the distinction between good and bad. You will, therefore, save yourselves from it if you are addicted to that habit. May God give us all, Harijans or not, the strength to follow the message that I am endeavouring to give throughout the length and breadth of India.

The Hindu, 21-12-1933

390. SPEECH AT PUBLIC MEETING, MADRAS[1]

December 20, 1933

This is a wonderful demonstration that you have made of your affection. I hope that every one of you realizes the seriousness and magnitude of the mission that I am trying to carry out in the name of God, for His sake and for His forsaken children whom we have come to understand as 'Harijans'. There can be, in God's eyes, no distinction between man and man even as there is no distinction between animal and animal. Had God designed one part of humanity to be lower than the other, He would have put some distinguishing mark upon some parts of our bodies whereby these distinctions could have been unmistakably seen, felt and demonstrated.

Go where you will from one end of India to the other, you will fail, as I have failed, to notice any such distinguishing feature in connection with those who call themselves high-caste Hindus and those whom high-caste Hindus describe as 'untouchables', 'invisibles' and what not.

I therefore ask you seriously to consider this urgent question. I have said, and I repeat what I have said from a thousand platforms before this vast audience, that if we do not remove root and branch untouchability from our hearts, we are a doomed race, and Hinduism, like many other 'isms', will perish and the discredit will be ours.

In the midst of this din and noise, I must not put before you the implications of this great movement. Suffice it to say that when untouchability is removed from our hearts Harijans will feel the glow of freedom, and then we would treat them as we do

[1] The meeting held at Tilak Ghat on the Triplicane Beach was attended by over one lakh people.

ourselves, we would know that they have the same rights absolutely and without exception as we have, and that 'Harijans' would be subject to the same discipline that *savarna* Hindus are. If by God's grace this message reaches your hearts, we shall forget all distinctions of high and low.

Now I would like you kindly to disperse quietly so that I too can go safely to my car. You must kindly go back to your homes. The proceedings are finished.

The Hindu, 21-12-1933

391. SPEECH TO CHILDREN[1]

MADRAS,
December 21, 1933

Little children, boys and girls, only one word. Remember that little children also have to play their part in this movement of purification. And the only thing that I want to say is: 'Children, be always good and always remember God in all troubles.'

The Hindu, 21-12-1933

392. SPEECH AT ROBINSON PARK, MADRAS

December 21, 1933

I thank you sincerely for the addresses that you have given me. I thank you equally for the purse and the gifts that you have presented to me. All these moneys will be used for the uplift of Harijans. For this great movement of self-purification, I want men and women to take their full share. Let us shed all our vices and bad habits. Let us pray to God that He may give us pure minds. If any one of you is addicted to carrion-eating, give up that bad habit. Observe the rules of hygiene and sanitation. Educate your children, and give up the drink habit, if you are in the habit of drinking. It is one of the greatest enemies of the human race. That many *savarna* Hindus drink spirituous liquors is no reason for Harijans to drink it. It is drink that makes men mad and makes them forget the distinction between wife,

[1] Gandhiji visited the Bharat Sabha, Vellala Teynampet, which was running a night school and religious classes for Harijans.

mother and sister. May God give strength to you to go through the process of purification. Now, you will excuse me for not giving you more of my time. I have still a big programme to carry through. Finally, I ask you to give me free passage without any noise. I thank you for this magnificent demonstration of your affection and interest that you take in this movement of purification. May God bless you.

The Hindu, 22-12-1933

393. SPEECH AT LABOURERS' MEETING, PERAMBUR[1]

December 21, 1933

FELLOW LABOURERS,

I thank you for the address you have given me.

If you will make common cause with labour all over India, you ought to be able to understand Hindustani. Unless you do that there is no junction between the North and the South. But that is not the burden of my mission tonight. Tonight I want to tell labour that labour at least should have no distinctions of high and low.

Having lived in the midst of labour for the last forty years, I know to my great sorrow that among labourers also there are distinctions. There are Harijan labourers and non-Harijan labourers. Even among non-Harijan labourers there are distinctions. You must forget these distinctions. Harijan labour and non-Harijan labour are all absolutely one. I say to those of you who claim to be Hindus that there is no warrant in religion for untouchability as we observe it today.

It is impossible that God who is the God of justice could possibly make those distinctions that man observes today in the name of religion. Lastly, those who are given to carrion-eating or beef-eating should give these up and if labour is to come to its own, you must give up the wretched habits of drink and gambling. I know that these two vices have degraded labour and desolated many homes among labourers. I therefore hope that you will give up the evil habits of drink and gambling. May God give you the strength to shed the evils of untouchability, drink and gambling.

The Hindu, 22-12-1933

[1] In reply to the address presented by the Madras and Southern Mahratta Railway Employees' Union

394. NOTES

Garlands

It is devoutly to be wished that organizers will wean people from presenting me with garlands of flowers. If garlands must be presented, they should be of charkha-spun, even, strong and fine yarn, which can be used without difficulty for weaving purposes. Garlands are not produced without money or, which is the same thing, labour. All the money and all the labour available is required for Harijan service. And, in any case, I cannot afford to have labour or money spent for my pleasure, vanity or glorification. The showering of flowers is an injurious custom. The hard stems of yellow flowers, when they are thrown from a distance are calculated to break eye-glasses and injure the eyes. My eyes have, more than once, narrowly escaped damage from these stems.

Let the money thus saved be used for adding to the purses collected. Indeed, I notice that there is room for economy in most arrangements. Motor-cars are used too lavishly. Only those of the local persons whose presence is necessary should accompany me from place to place. Workers are trustees for the Harijan cause, and as such they are expected to guard the Harijan chest with greater care and vigilance than they would bestow upon their own.

Auctions and Jewellery

I have seen a paragraph in a newspaper adversely criticizing my appeal to the women for gifts of jewellery and my auctioning things received as donations. Indeed, I would like the thousands of sisters who attend my meetings to give me most, if not all, of the jewellery they wear. In this country of semi-starvation of millions and insufficient nutrition of practically eighty per cent of the people, the wearing of jewellery is an offence to the eye. A woman in India has rarely any cash which she can call her own. But the jewellery she wears does belong to her, though even that she will not, dare not, give away, without the consent of her lord and master. It ennobles her to part with, for a good cause, something she calls her own. Moreover, most of this jewellery has no pretension to art, some of it is positively ugly and a harbinger of dirt. Such are anklets, heavy necklaces, clasps worn not for

adjusting the hair, but purely as a decoration for unkempt, unwashed and often evil-smelling hair, or row upon row of bangles from wrist to elbow. In my opinion, the wearing of expensive jewellery is a distinct loss to the country. It is so much capital locked up or, worse still, allowed to wear away. And in this movement of self-purification, the surrender of jewellery by women or men I hold to be a distinct benefit to society. Those who give do so gladly. My invariable condition is that on no account should the jewellery donated be replaced. Indeed, women have blessed me for inducing them to part with things which had enslaved them. And in not a few cases men have thanked me for being an instrument for bringing simplicity into their homes.

Now a word about auctions. I have seen nothing wrong about them. They set up a healthy rivalry and are an innocent method of evoking the generous impulse in man or woman for a noble cause. I have resorted to the method now for years without ever noticing the slightest evil effect produced by these auctions. Why is it wrong to pay a price beyond its intrinsic value for an article which one prizes, even though it be as a memento, if it is not wrong to pay fabulous prices for worn-out manuscripts of authors reputed to be great? Surely, the price of an article is what a man voluntarily pays for it. And let it be remembered that people who bid at my auctions do not pay fancy prices for pleasing me. I know they do not. I can recall occasions when I have not been able to induce bids, even though the audiences have been otherwise as enthusiastic or responsive as anywhere else.

Abuse of Fasting

Cases of abuse of fasting have recently come under my observation. One person wrote threatening to fast if I did not send my autograph, three if I did not visit their places during the tour and another if his village did not produce Rs. 5,000 for khadi, Harijan and kindred constructive activities. I have no doubt that all these are instances of abuse of fasting. Why should I give my autograph, or visit a place or workers find money under threat of a fast? There should be a moral obligation on the one against whom a fast is taken. Fasts are legitimately taken in the interest of some public good or for doing service to those for whom they are taken. I am well aware that the dividing line between use and abuse is often too thin to be noticeable. The better test, therefore, perhaps is whether the person fasting has undergone the requisite discipline for taking fasts calculated to influence conduct other than his own. In the cases quoted, so far as I can see, there was utter absence of qualification or previous preparation.

Moreover, legitimate fasts, even if repeated by many, should be capable of response. In the cases under consideration, if a thousand persons asked for my autograph, or a thousand workers in a thousand villages desired my visit to their places or a worker required poor people to pay the money he wanted, it is clear that response might easily be a physical impossibility.

Harijan, 22-12-1933

395. SPEECH AT GEORGE TOWN MEETING, MADRAS

December 22, 1933

FRIENDS,

Up to now we have done no business. What has happened is, the precious few minutes that are at my disposal have been taken away in the reading of addresses. Therefore, before I get the right to speak to you, I must do some business. (Laughter) I must ask you now to dispossess me of all these trinkets that have been given to me and exchange them for pure gold. (Renewed laughter) Then, I cannot be guilty of stealing away this diamond ring; and I shall, therefore, have to offer it to you.

I shall now begin the business portion of the meeting.[1]

Gandhiji then spoke a few words in Hindi, thanking both the donors and the successful bidders for the help they had thus rendered for the cause of the Harijans. This was a great *punyakaryam*[2], he said; and in such acts of service, they must feel a pride. He exhorted them to remove from their hearts notions of high and low because of birth. Untouchability, he reiterated, was a great sin; and whoever made a resolve to rid his heart of this impurity of treating a certain section of his brothers as untouchables was really a better man. Gandhiji then explained in a few words why he called untouchables Harijans. He had learnt in Tamil a great saying —*Dikkatravarukku deivame tunai*[3], and this indeed was the justification for the name 'Harijan' as applied to this class of unfortunate people. It was not his own coining; it was an untouchable who persuaded him to use it. He then concluded with an appeal to their hearts to cleanse their religion by removing the blot of untouchability.

This is a great *yajna*; and I wish to God that He gives you wisdom to take your proper place therein.

The Hindu, 22-12-1933

[1] Gandhiji then auctioned the articles presented to him. Several ladies offered him jewellery.

[2] Meritorious act

[3] "God is the help of the helpless."

396. SPEECH AT JAIN MANDIR, MADRAS[1]

December 22, 1933

Now I proceed to business. You people go to far-off lands exploiting people and amassing wealth. I am now going to exploit you.

The audience greeted this statement with laughter and cheers. Putting up for auction an ivory casket, Gandhiji said:

What will you give for this?

The first bid for the casket which would be worth roughly Rs. 15, was Rs. 101 by Mr. Ramnath Goenka.

Get along, Rs. 101 is nothing for you, Gujaratis assembled here.

Rs. 201 was the next bid.

Shall I let it go . . . Once, . . . twice, . . . I will not yet say "thrice" . . . . There is yet time. . . . A few hundred is nothing to you.

You know I have come on a mission of reform. It is the cause of Truth, as I see it, and I appeal to you to help in it. The purse you have presented me is a poor one compared to what you can afford.

Proceeding, Gandhiji said that the work of Harijan uplift he was now engaged in was a sacred one. So far as he could understand the spirit of the Vedas, he saw nothing to warrant distinctions of high and low, touchable and untouchable. In the eyes of God, according to true *advaita*[2], all men were equal. It was only *maya* that made them see such distinctions between man and man. They must no longer consider their fellow-men as untouchable or unseeable. Could any man say that his head or eye or ear was superior to his hand or feet or any other part of his body? All were equally important. Similarly every section of society was as important as any other and they must look on all men as equal. He saw nothing in this doctrine that was against the dictates of dharma. He had full confidence that the work he was carrying on was God's work and that it was the path of Truth. He prayed to God to confer prosperity on them and he appealed to them to utilize their wealth in the service of Truth and their fellow-men.

The Hindu, 22-12-1933

[1] The Gujarati, Marwari and Sindhi residents welcomed Gandhiji at 9.30 a.m.

[2] Non-dualism

397. *SPEECH AT VAISHYA ASSOCIATION*[1]

MADRAS,
December 22, 1933

Since ancient times, we have been taught that before God, elephant and ant, Brahmin and Shudra are alike. So also are they alike before a '*samadarshi*'[2] or seer. What a pundit or sage does, a *prakrit* or man of the world should do. Religious injunction is the same for both. You cannot teach truth to a pundit and untruth to a *prakrit* man. Vaishyas believe that untruth will do in business. But this is not what the Shastras or dharma teaches. In the universal religion, there is neither high nor low. The distinction between high and low is the root of all our sorrows. The abolition of untouchability is a *shuddhiyajna*[3] for Hindus. What you gave today is your share in the *shuddhiyajna* and is the earnest money of your *pratijna*[4].

You ask me whether purification can come from inner or outer forces. The question is well put. Purification by outer means is valueless. If I forced you to bow to me, it would be against dharma. It is only by the inner effort that religious objects can be achieved.

I beseech you to do that willingly today, which you will be compelled to do hereafter.

The Bombay Chronicle, 27-12-1933

[1] The Southern India Vaishya Association presented an address to Gandhiji. The speech, delivered in Hindi, was translated into Telugu by K. Nageswara Rao Pantulu.

[2] One who sees all as equal; *vide* also Vol. XXXII, p. 231.

[3] Purifying sacrifice

[4] Pledge; the reference is to the pledge taken at Bombay on September 25, 1932; *vide* Vol. LI, p. 139.

398. SPEECH AT ANDHRA MAHA SABHA, MADRAS

December 22, 1933

After unveiling the portrait, Gandhiji said that Mr. Nageswara Rao Pantulu in flesh and blood was different from Nageswara Rao Pantulu in canvas. The latter became a static personality. Ever since he had known Mr. Pantulu he had one speciality about him and that was that Mr. Pantulu always believed in giving himself away to those who needed him or his help. Mr. Nageswara Rao Pantulu had told him that the bulk of the profits he made from 'Amrutanjan'[1] went to the relief of the distressed, to help those who were in need. Mr. Nageswara Rao Pantulu had absolutely no other purpose. Mahatmaji prayed that Mr. Nageswara Rao Pantulu might continue to evolve from step to step till at last everybody could go to him and get comfort and help. They must all translate in their own lives all the noble qualities that they found in or imputed to Mr. Nageswara Rao Pantulu.

The Hindu, 22-12-1933

399. SPEECH AT HINDI PRACHAR SABHA CONVOCATION[2]

MADRAS,
December 22, 1933

After apologizing to the graduates and *pracharaks*[3] for his inability, due to pressure of time, to hand over to them their respective degrees in person, he assured them of his congratulations and blessings. He had very little by way of advice to give them for what there was to say had already been said by Mr. Tripathi[4]. But one point he would like to emphasize—about the need for following that advice. Hindi *prachar* in South India, and as he had seen, more particularly in Andhradesha, had made steady progress; but he would not be satisfied unless Hindi was understood by everyone to such an extent that not one would desire him to speak in English. His appeal to them was to push on with their work with courage and determination. They had started well

[1] Trade name of a balm

[2] Gandhiji presided over the third annual convocation of the Dakshin Bharat Hindi Prachar Sabha held at the Gokhale Hall.

[3] Trained teachers; literally, 'propagators'

[4] Ramnaresh Tripathi, who delivered the convocation address

and he hoped they would carry it on. It was stated that Hindi presented some peculiar difficulties to people of these parts of India. Perhaps this was true to some extent. But he felt no Indian language would present any insurmountable difficulty to an Indian. There was an element of Sanskrit common to all Indian languages which, so far as he could see, should make it very easy for them to gain at least a working knowledge of any Indian language. They found no difficulty whatever in mastering a foreign language like English or even such difficult languages as Tamil. Why should Hindi, therefore, present any great difficulty to them? It was the language of 22 out of the 35 crores of India's population, and it was bound to be the common language of India.

It was stated by some, Gandhiji said, that Muslims could not understand Hindi and they understood only Urdu. But he could see no difference between Hindi and Urdu as they obtained among common folk. In Islamic books and a section of Muslims, it was true that a large percentage of Persian and Arabic words were employed thus rendering Urdu difficult for Hindus to understand. Similarly, some Hindus also use a large percentage of Sanskrit words in their books and conversation, making them difficult for Muslims to comprehend. But when he talked of Hindi and Urdu being identical he was not referring to this kind of Hindi or Urdu. He referred to only the language in vogue among common folk in North India, which contained a good mixture of Sanskrit, Persian and Arabic words and still was understood by everyone, Hindu or Muslim. It was this language he wanted every one of them to learn to understand and speak. Unless they did this, he was afraid people from the South could not touch the heart of the masses in the North and *vice versa*.

The Hindi Prachar Sabha, he said, had been working in Dakshin Bharat for over fifteen years and yet, he asked, what had people done to avail themselves of its services and, by learning the language, to promote Indian national unity? Did they not find time and money to waste on the races, cinemas and amusements? Could they not spare a part of these for the learning of Hindi? He had heard the Sabha was in need of adequate accommodation and had been trying to acquire buildings of its own but could not for want of funds. If everyone came forward to learn the language paying a small sum for the Sabha's services the necessary money could easily be found and the Sabha need not continue expecting help from Northern India. It was the duty of South India to make the Sabha self-dependent. He would therefore repeat his appeal that South Indians must one and all avail themselves of the Sabha's services and help in this national work.[1]

The Hindu, 23-12-1933

[1] Gandhiji then auctioned the shawl, the convocation 'robe', which had been presented to him at the beginning of the proceedings.

400. *REPLY TO DEPRESSED CLASSES DEPUTATION*[1]

MADRAS,
December 22, 1933

Come in Rao Bahadur. Can I give you a chair? Now, Rao Bahadur, I have got your letter. Shall we begin with it? Or what shall we do? Just as you would regulate the proceedings.

"Will you permit its reading?" Mr. Srinivasan submitted. Gandhiji said:

Yes, you please.

. . . Mr. Bashyam Iyengar threw out a hint that the letter consisted of six typed pages.

It all depends on Mr. Srinivasan, who is the Chairman here. But so far as I am concerned, I have read it from top to bottom.

Mr. Srinivasan suggested that it might be allowed to be read for the benefit of his colleagues as there was hardly time to circulate it to them. Gandhiji asked Mr. Pushparaj to go ahead.

You will excuse me, if I am not attending to it. Because, I have almost got it by heart. In the mean time, I shall be putting my papers in order.[2]

The best thing would be for me to take up point after point and deal with it. What you say about the Poona Pact is common ground between us; and I entirely endorse the view that if *savarna* Hindus do not work the Pact in the manner it is intended it should be, it can become nugatory and of no benefit whatsoever.[3] I will admit that in its entirety.

How far the Central Board at Delhi or the Provincial Boards will be able directly to affect the elections, I do not know. I

[1] The executive of the Madras Depressed Classes Federation waited in deputation on Gandhiji in the evening. The deputation consisted of R. Srinivasan, V. Dharmalingam Pillai, Swami Sahajananda, P. V. Rajagopala Pillai and Pushparaj. Others present were: V. Bashyam Iyengar, President of the Provincial Board of Servants of Untouchables Society, K. Nageswara Rao Pantulu, V. Venkatasubbiah, K. Bashyam and R. V. Sastri, Editor, *Harijan.*

[2] The letter was then read out and Gandhiji gave the reply.

[3] The deputationists had apprehended that the Yeravda Pact would not be effective in view of caste Hindus' "tactics and unfair methods" and that they could be prevented from electing men of their choice.

think it is a very difficult and delicate subject. Therefore what I have directed is that with these elections generally we should not interfere. But we do interfere where injustice is done to a Harijan candidate. When that happens, as it did in Bombay, we try to set it right.

Gandhiji related the Bombay incident at some length and mentioned his efforts in effecting the withdrawal of the candidate (for election to the Legislative Council) who had ranged himself against one who was a member of the Servants of India Society, uniformly known to be decisively friendly to Harijan interests.

In Delhi there was the danger of the Harijan candidate not being elected to the Municipality. We intervened and room was specially made for the Harijan candidate. In Cawnpore, there was a Harijan candidate and it was wrong for *savarna* Hindus to have opposed him. I came to know about it after the election. The gentleman who was defeated wrote to me; and I replied that it was wrong on the part of the *savarna* rival to have so ranged himself against the Harijan candidate. We tried our best to get this gentleman resign his seat. At that time it was not successful. What has since happened I do not know. There are other instances, as well.

I give these instances to show that where there is a Harijan candidate, whose *bona fides* is not impeached in any manner whatsoever, the Central Board have tried to influence the *savarna* Hindu candidates to withdraw from the contest. But where Harijan candidates are opposed to one another, or when *savarna* Hindus are conducting the elections, the Board does not interfere —which you really want the Board to do. You desire that the Board should so regulate the elections or so influence the elections, as to have the right type of men elected. But, I think, the Board will then lose its influence. Today the Board is daily rising in influence, because of its absolute neutrality except where, as I said, a Harijan stands to suffer. That is the line of demarcation we have placed. If you examine the situation, I have no doubt you will agree with me.

If you want to make this Board an effective instrument of service, it must keep itself apart and aloof from politics, and when the level of our character rises and the root that lies at the heart of untouchability is affected and expelled, there would be levelling up of everything all along the line. That is my hope. But with these lapses of mere moral character, the Central Board should not interfere. Once we endeavour to do that, I think, you would find that the whole of the structure will fall to pieces.

The Board is absolutely unaffected by politics; and, as I have so often said, the Harijan movement is purely religious. If I succeed in doing so, and if the Board accepts that policy in all sincerity and works it out earnestly, you will find nothing better for our purpose. The movement will become purer, and the Board would be wiser and achieve its ends quicker for its aloofness and abstention from direct intervention in politics.

Passing on to the next point raised in Mr. Srinivasan's letter, namely, economic condition of Depressed Classes and the removal of untouchability, in general, through the instrumentality of the Government, Mahatma Gandhi said that he totally agreed with them—that the Board should not do a single act which would interfere with the encouragement afforded by the Government; and the Board, he assured, would not do it, no matter what views he held in connection with the Government.

There is no doubt I have been holding very strong views against the present system of government. It is a mischievous system, taking the interests of India as a whole. But I cannot possibly apply that doctrine in connection with Harijans, unless I would so throw myself in the turmoil and resist the Government there also. I cannot do it.

I say, honestly, I could not possibly resist doing it, if the Harijans were capable of looking after themselves, as you [Mr. Srinivasan] are and as Mr. Pushparaj is. That is, so far as you individuals are concerned. Taken as a mass they are absolutely helpless. When they can help themselves, stand equal to *savarna* Hindus and brush shoulders with them, I shall be at ease and then say: 'No; I cannot look to your interests.' That I cannot possibly do.

Let them take all the advantage they can from the Government and let them take all the advantage they can from the *savarna* Hindus. The two mixed together will enable them to redress the balance somewhat. Even then, I do not believe they would be able to redress the balance because this crushing down that has gone on for ages is not going to be lifted off entirely in a few years, no matter what atonement is done by *savarna* Hindus. It would take a long time before the Harijans come to their own and feel they are just as good as they might be.

I can give you this absolute assurance that I shall never interfere with the policy of the Government in so far as the Harijans are concerned. Here also I will say I am conducting this tour in a manner so as to disarm all suspicion; and I will never take advantage of the Harijan movement in order to further the aims of

the Civil Disobedience Movement. It would then not be civil but criminal. I do not ask your word of certificate. But I do say that I have never had any criminal intention in all my life. In order to justify that civil nature, I am keeping this Harijan cause apart. If, on the other hand, I wanted to use it for a political purpose, I would not have hesitated to make an open declaration that 'of course, I am going to use the Harijans for conducting the civil resistance movement'. No; emphatically no. On the contrary, those Harijans who are living with me, and who, according to their declarations, owe their all to their association with me, pleaded with me to allow them to join the movement, when I was disbanding the Ashram. 'Why do you keep us aloof ? Are we less patriotic and less capable of offering resistance?' 'You dare not do it,' I warned, 'because', I said, 'you, as representatives of Harijans, would be putting yourselves in the wrong.'

The Servants of Untouchables Society is today under the control of men who cannot afford to offer civil resistance. Messrs A. V. Thakkar and G. D. Birla are the moving spirits there. Not only that; all Congressmen, who have got this civil resistance in them and wanted to do so, are also prohibited from taking office in the Central Board, Provincial Boards or any of their branches.

There still remains one question as to the activities of the Society and its relationship with the Government. There again, I would say, 'Do not put that weight on the Board.' If you do that, it would lose its universal influence. I want the Board to have a universal influence and its influence felt effectively everywhere. In matters you have mentioned, the Board will never interfere with the Government. The Government may even adopt measures that may be harmful. Then it will be for you to put your foot down. We would not do it. There again I endorse what you [Mr. Srinivasan] have said in your letter.

In your politics also you say you must be allowed to develop along your own lines. I entirely grant it. There will be no interference on the part of the Board. So then, when the Government's policy is questionable in connection with Harijans' interests, it will be for you and for you alone to decide whether to resist it, even by constitutional and legitimate means. But so far as the Board is concerned, I will say, 'We have drawn the line of demarcation and there we stand.' If they do stand, I know the Board will command the respect of the Government also. So all along the line, they will be acting on the square—all right angles and no acute angle.

Now, to education.[1] On this subject, I think the Central Board can present you with an absolutely good record. Everywhere scholarships are being given freely. So many hundreds of Harijans are now in receipt of scholarships which they cannot get from the Government or any other agency. We never say to a single person: 'Do not go to the Government.' That is not a policy which is applicable to this Board. We encourage them to seek assistance from the Government departments. Where there was not enough, the Board supplemented it. We have done it in so many cases. That is our policy in connection with education.

Then, ah! you say that repatriation is the result of my activities in South Africa.[2] That is a very unkind cut. (Laughter) I say that history will give a different verdict.

When I landed on the South African soil in the year 1893, repatriation was on the anvil. Do you know that a Bill was actually passed in the Natal Legislature whereby every Indian, who after finishing his indenture wanted to settle in Natal, was required—to do what?

MR. R. SRINIVASAN: Pay poll tax.

GANDHIJI: How much?

MR. SRINIVASAN: £1 a head.

No fear. They stipulated £25. I resisted it. The original intention was that after indenture had been finished, they must go back. That is to say, indenture should expire in India. I promoted petitions in the Natal Parliament. I did it through the mercantile community, as it was not possible for me to do it through individual Indians at that time. The provisions were altered in consequence; and that is a matter of record. Therefore you will see, historically, repatriation was taking place when I went to South Africa; and on my going there, it became impossible. You then express your fear that this untouchability movement may end as the movement in South Africa ended. I wish it ended like that. (Loud laughter) Repatriation is now voluntary and repatriates get money compensation. In 1893, it was in-

[1] The deputationists had complained that the policy of admitting Harijan children into common schools, where caste Hindus predominated, was not working well and was not conducive to the educational progress of the Depressed Classes. They sought Gandhiji's help in raising funds for scholarships, stipends and for establishing hostels.

[2] The deputationists had stated that those who had been repatriated from South Africa as a result of Gandhiji's work were undergoing great suffering and hardship for want of employment.

voluntary and compulsory without any compensation whatsoever. If that was the crime I have committed—(Renewed laughter)—I plead guilty.

Winding up this part of the discussion, Gandhiji said that the scheme of repatriation had proved a failure. He knew it was a failure because he was in correspondence with those who could speak with direct knowledge in South Africa. He was guiding Indians there to the extent he could; and warning them against coming to India where they would be outcastes even among outcastes. In these circumstances, he said, he had nothing to repent for, in regard to South Africa.

Let me now come to the temple-entry question; and I will at once say that I accept your point.[1] If you say you do not want it at all, I agree. But it is due to the *savarna* Hindus to say, 'Come to our temples. They are as much open to you as they are to us. It is entirely your choice whether you will enter or not.' I do not invite Harijans to take part in this agitation for temple-entry. But you can signify your approval, if you wanted, that this is also your right, but you may not exercise it. Or you may take a different attitude. That is entirely for you to consider. But so far as I am concerned, it is simply a one-sided thing. It is a matter of repentance for *savarna* Hindus and a change of heart. You are entitled to come to those places which you consider to be our sanctuaries. You have just as much right as any *savarna* Hindu. When that right is recognized, it is for you to exercise that right or not.

About the drink evil, Gandhiji said that he was always circumspect and careful in offering advice to this community.[2] He was aware that it was prevalent among other communities. But only the Harijans, who were under the great handicap of having to fight uphill, could not afford it. They had got to be, like Caesar's wife, above suspicion.

The *savarna* Hindus may wallow in lakes of red water; but you must fly away from it. I do not, however, want to wound your susceptibilities. I tell you, gentlemen like you may take it amiss; but the large body of Harijans don't. After all, you and I know that I have been working in their midst for years and years in order to wean them from drink. Therefore, I think you ought not to seek to restrict my freedom. You can certainly warn

[1] The deputationists had stated that they were not opposed to temple-entry but it was not advisable for them to take active part in the movement.

[2] The deputationists had complained that there were several communities which were addicted to drink and other evil habits and, therefore, to stigmatize the Depressed Classes alone was unfair and unjust.

me; and I accept it—shall shape my language in such a manner that it does not offend any person whatsoever; and you may take it from me that I would not say a single word to offend anybody.

Lastly to the name Harijan. You say that the Depressed Classes were not consulted. They consulted me. That is the point. (Laughter) I have visited all parts of India. 'Why are we called Harijans?' I am asked. Why should they not have a better name? That is the generality of feeling. 'For Heaven's sake do not call us coolies,' they pleaded. At one time this word had a particular significance. A whole race was called by that name. If it was not now used it does not mean there has come about a change of heart. The offence to the ear has been removed. That is what the new name has achieved. It is not, as I said, my coining. An untouchable pleaded with me not to be known by any expression of eternal reproach. 'Depressed' or 'Suppressed' reminded them of slavery, he very rightly said. 'I have no name to suggest; will you suggest?' I asked. Then the man suggested 'Harijan'. He quoted in support from Narasinh Mehta, the Gujarati poet who had used it in his works. I jumped at it. I knew also the Tamil saying *Dikkatravarukku deivame tunai.* Is not 'Harijan' a paraphrase of it? They are God's chosen, who are outcastes. That is what 'Harijan' signifies as applied to suppressed classes.

The certificate you have given in the last paragraph of your letter[1] is too early for me. You all have listened to what I have had to say to the points raised. We shall all work together with the same end in view. I am sure God is with us; and therefore success is assured. I have no misgivings at all. I know untouchability is dying. To me the monster seems to be still taking a few breaths; but they are last breaths. (Loud applause)

MR. R. SRINIVASAN: I hope so.

Yes; we can honestly hope.

The Hindu, 23-12-1933

[1] The deputationists had thanked Gandhiji for starting an unprecedented movement in the cause of their community which had given 'a great impetus to the caste Hindus to banish untouchability', and wished his mission a successful end.

401. INTERVIEW TO "MADRAS MAIL"

MADRAS,
December 22, 1933

Asked about his statement[1] that he had given Pandit Jawaharlal a power of attorney to act for him as leader of the Congress Party, Mr. Gandhi said that he had noted the Pandit's reply and the implication that he was joking when he made the statement.

That is not wholly true. There was and is a serious background to my statement. Having abandoned politics for the present, and decided to devote myself to the elimination of untouchability from Hinduism I cannot govern the Congress Party. When I am asked by individuals to give my views privately on some point at issue I may do so, but I am not in a position to define or discuss policies. This is Pandit Jawaharlal's work. And I have no desire to interfere with his absolute discretion. Hence my remark about power of attorney.

Will not the Pandit's well-known communist leaning mean that Congress policy will be given a communist bias under his guidance?

No. I do not think so. Jawaharlal is too honest a man for that. I do not think he will depart from the fundamental Congress policy without giving ample notice to his colleagues. I do not think that Jawaharlal's own views are yet sufficiently crystallized to make any fundamental departure from Congress policy likely. He is a firm believer in socialism, but his ideas on how best the socialist principle can be applied to Indian conditions are still in the melting pot. His communist views need not, therefore, frighten anyone.

Reminded that the masses cannot be expected to make fine distinctions between ideological discussions and frank exhortations to pursue certain courses, Mr. Gandhi admitted that there was always a danger of the crowd misunderstanding a speaker's purpose but declared that it was not Jawaharlal's intention to inflame crowds.

[1] According to a report in *The Hindustan Times*, 15-12-1933, concluding the discussion with workers in Delhi on December 14, Gandhiji had said that he "had given general power of attorney to Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru and asked those present to discuss everything concerning the Congress and other things with Pandit Jawaharlal".

Conversation then turned on communist opposition to large estates, which, apparently, Jawaharlal shares.

I do not think that the land should be parcelled out. It would be a serious loss if the influence of the big hereditary landholder were wholly destroyed. I do think, however, that the actual cultivator should have a title in the soil, and a larger share of its produce. At present, in many places, he gets far too little. He should get a fair share and not a bare maintenance.

Referring to agrarian movements in various parts of the country, Mr. Gandhi declared:

Whatever the Government do, this tremendous awakening is not going to die out. It has come to stay. What has impressed me most is that it has been accompanied with so little violence, thus constituting an unconscious manifestation of the effectiveness of non-violence.

Asked whether he had contemplated the danger of middlemen, in the shape of money-lenders or marketing agents, etc., acquiring a foothold between the land-owner and the cultivators as a result of recent land legislation, Mr. Gandhi replied:

It would be a deplorable thing if the middlemen got hold of the land. We must safeguard the interests of the actual cultivator, by which I mean the man who himself tills the land. He may employ many labourers to assist him, but so long as he works on the land himself he fulfils my definition of a cultivating occupant.

My work for the Harijans is purely religious. It has no political motive behind it, and is essentially humanitarian. It is in no sense of the term a political movement.

But you will not deny that the movement must have political consequences?

That is true. I do say that, though such political consequences will be by-products of the movement, they do not constitute its purpose. Any religious movement must have repercussions on other aspects of life, for religion in its broadest sense governs all departments of life.

Mr. Gandhi admitted that the movement was liable to exploitation for political purposes, and was aware of the assertions, voiced recently by Sir N. N. Sirkar, that its purpose was to consolidate Hinduism against the other minorities, but he firmly and emphatically denied that he had any such object. In fact he declared that he differed from the Hindu Mahasabha in this regard.

The Hindu Mahasabha's activities are essentially communal, and are designed to further Hindu interests as distinguished from other. The Harijan movement has no communal bias. It aims at the internal reform of Hinduism, at ridding it of artificial distinctions of high and low. I am fighting for the same rights, without reservation, for the Harijans that caste Hindus have in matters religious, social and political. I am not aiming at increasing the numbers of Hindu voters as such. So far as one single person can, I am trying to keep this movement entirely free from politics.

When the scribe[1] referred to the view held by many members of the minority communities, Muslims, Christians, etc., that the political effect of the movement, and the political end sought by others, whatever Mr. Gandhi's own purpose may be, is to secure the domination of a consolidated Hindu majority, overwhelming all minorities by its numbers, Mr. Gandhi repeated his resolve to keep the movement free from all taint of politics.

I want to absorb Christians, Muslims and others, as one indivisible nation, having common interest, then minorities will not feel themselves to be minorities. If untouchability is abolished, the bar to closer intercourse between Hindus and the minorities will disappear, and with its disappearance will come a new unity of aim and interest, a new oneness. This Harijan movement is in no sense exclusive. It aims at removing untouchability in every shape and form.

Reminded that Dr. Moonje recently declared that Hinduism included all, Muslims, Christians, Parsis, and the rest, Mr. Gandhi replied:

The object of Dr. Moonje differs greatly from mine. They are haggling over seats in the Legislature. That movement is solely political, mine is non-political.

To a question whether he approved of the bullying methods of some of his lieutenants in the matter of temple-entry, Mr. Gandhi forcibly replied:

If anybody in the Harijan movement tries to use force he is acting against my wishes. I try to keep the movement from descending to low levels, but there are difficult elements in any movement. For myself, I refuse to open a temple unless satisfied that the wish that it should be opened to Harijans is general. Recently I refused to open a temple because the trustees seemed to be sharply divided. Only where temple-entry is approved by an overwhelming majority of the actual worshippers and by the trustees of the temple, will I consent to open it.

[1] The correspondent

Asked for his views on the Temple-entry Bills now before the Legislative Assembly, Mr. Gandhi declared that the Bills were necessary to free the hands of trustees and worshippers who might be willing to open temples to Harijans but were prevented from doing so by judge-made laws.

Unless we free Hinduism from these restraints it will become stagnant, and perish.

Unless we can root out untouchability from Hinduism it must perish, it will deserve to die, and I will not regret its passing away. Untouchability must go. What I say to Europeans is: 'Come down and work with us as free citizens, rather than as members of the ruling classes.'

Mr. Gandhi said that he was amazed at the warmth of the welcome that Madras had given him, at the size of the crowd on the Triplicane Beach on Wednesday evening.

It took me 30 minutes to reach the platform, and 45 to return from it to my car again. There were over one lakh of people, and it did good to see how Harijans and caste people mixed together in the crowd. That would not have happened a few years ago. Untouchability is going.[1]

Madras Mail, 22-12-1933

402. INTERVIEW TO "THE HINDU"[2]

MADRAS,
December 22, 1933

As usual I have experienced nothing but deep affection from the people wherever I have gone. But I must confess that I was unprepared for the demonstration at the Beach and the demonstrations that I witnessed during the visits to several labour areas. The numbers that attended these demonstrations everywhere exceeded past records.

Whilst there is no doubt that personal affection and attachment had to do a great deal with them, I am convinced that the vast mass of humanity that seemed to cling to me fully understood and appreciated what I stood for and what I had come for. If their religious sense had revolted against the drive against untouchability, the exhibition of their affection, even if I could not have lost it altogether, would have been tempered

[1] A cutting of this report was enclosed with "Letter to Jawaharlal Nehru", p. 404.

[2] Given on the eve of Gandhiji's departure from Madras

with moderation and restraint, if not reasonable coolness. I am used to reading the mass mind by taking at a sweep the expression in their eyes and their general demeanour. I could find no trace of disapproval of what I have been doing in connection with untouchability. The manner in which they came forward with their contributions when I asked for them was also significant and went to strengthen the impressions I have given. I am, therefore, filled with hope for the future.

I feel that even in the South untouchability is shaken to its very roots. I would like to say to my sanatanist friends that I have no desire whatsoever to wound their susceptibilities. I want to find points of agreement; and I know there are many. The points of disagreement are few. If my approach to them cannot bring about immediate agreement, I know that time will, if I have patience which I feel I have.

I would like to add one word as to the behaviour of the Police. Today was really a trying time for them, as I had to pass through the business parts of George Town; and it gives me pleasure to be able to say that their behaviour was friendly and helpful. They became as it were one of the people and handled them in a gentle manner. I am grateful to them for this exhibition of friendliness.

The Hindu, 23-12-1933

403. MESSAGE TO TAMIL LOVERS' CONFERENCE

December 22, 1933

I hope that the love of Tamil lovers will prove lasting and stand the severest strain. The superficial knowledge that I have of Tamil has enabled me to appreciate the beauty and the richness of the language. To neglect it would appear to me to be criminal.

M. K. GANDHI[1]

The Hindu, 23-12-1933. Also C.W. 9699. Courtesy: Madras Library Association

[1] The signature is in the Tamil script.

404. SPEECH AT GUNTUR[1]

December 23, 1933

BROTHERS AND SISTERS,

Guntur is not new to me. I thank you for your addresses and the purse you have offered to me. The lawyers of Guntur have subscribed a sum of Rs. 145. I myself was a lawyer once. I say I cannot accept such a small sum from the lawyers. They are not so poor. I understand from this that the Guntur lawyers have not interested themselves in the Harijan cause. This sum of Rs. 145 can be given by a single vakil. I ask them, 'What are you going to do?' I know the lawyers of Guntur. That is why I am telling them so. Last time when I was here, they gave me a bag of money. All days are not alike. Then money was plentiful, now a little scarce.

I have just visited Mr. Punna Rao's Gurunatheswara temple at Tilakpet. Because of the name given to the deity, the temple has become unpopular as the deity was named after the paternal uncle of Mr. Punna Rao. In truth, there is nothing wrong in the name 'Gurunatheswara', though the name "Gurunath" may be wrong. In my opinion God should not be named so as to perpetuate the memory of a human being. It is not proper that the name of the donor should go with the charity. This is my personal opinion. The name of the God should not really matter. Mr. Punna Rao, the late Gurnadham's brother's son, has told me that he has no objection to change the name of the deity. The deity will hereafter be called 'Gouri Vishweshwara'. I have signed the paper containing the new name.

Mr. Punna Rao wants to throw open the temple to the Harijans. But I have asked him not to do it now and for this reason. Temple-entry and change of name at one and the same time is not desirable under the peculiar circumstances of the case. I am not against any temple being thrown open to the Harijans. But I am not for compulsion. When the *bhaktas* and the trustees are willing, the temple should be thrown open to the Harijans. Now that the deity's name has been changed, the

[1] Gandhiji's speech in Hindi was translated into Telugu by Konda Venkatappayya.

trustees and myself are anxious to see how many of you will visit the temple. Three months hence from today, i.e., on the 23rd of March next, this temple will be thrown open to Harijans. It cannot be done unless public opinion favours it. If public opinion favours it, the temple will be thrown open on the 23rd of March next, by which time I hope the issue will be settled. I hope you will attend this temple from now on and witness the entry into it by the Harijans on the 23rd of March next.

If the *savarnas* do not do justice to the Harijans the Hindu religion will perish. No religion perishes owing to extraneous causes. It lies in nobody's power to do it. But a religion will perish if those who follow it tread the path of *adharma*.

The Hindu, 24-12-1933

405. *SPEECH AT HARIJANS' MEETING, THALLAPALEM*

December 23, 1933

It gives me much pleasure to be able to come here. But I must also tell you that it gives me much trouble. The car could not negotiate its road to my satisfaction. Therefore, most of the way I had to walk. Walking itself is no trouble. But the fact is I had no time and yet I have to come here. The promise having been made, I have to fulfil that promise.

By cutting the knot, I have performed the opening ceremony of the Harijan Ayurvedic Kuteeram. I hope it will be a proper institution for healing the ills of those surrounding this place. Though, through the kindness of the organizers of this function, the address has not been read to you, I have read it. The address is a report of your present activities and somewhat your hopes for the future. I do wish that your hopes for the future may be fulfilled, but as a worker of 50 years' standing I want to utter a word of caution.

You have a very ambitious programme and if the managers or trustees of your programme are vigilant, painstaking, honest and men of unimpeachable character, it is just possible that you can work up the programme. But if there is want of vigilance, want of care, want of honesty, want of ability, I promise that not even one item of your programme will be fulfilled. For my part, I will appeal to the Harijan Sevak Sangh to give you an equal contribution for the work you might do. Well, I can make this promise on behalf of the Harijan Sevak Sangh, viz., that if you will produce a workable scheme and men of character that will satisfy

the Harijan Sevak Sangh, and if you produce proper accounts which can be inspected from time to time by the Harijan Sevak Sangh, certainly the Harijan Sevak Sangh will be able to render you help, financially. Therefore, if you do not receive help from the Harijan Sevak Sangh you will have to blame yourself and not the Harijan Sevak Sangh. But you will be able to get help from the Harijan Sevak Sangh if you satisfy the conditions I have suggested. As far as I know from the previous history of the Harijan Sevak Sangh it never went back from the promises it made.

The Harijan Sevak Sangh has enough of money to satisfy your wants.

To those who have assembled here I appeal to make use of all the institutions that may rise in your midst in every legitimate way possible. I want to hear of Harijan institutions coming into being here and everywhere. The object of the Harijan Sevak Sangh is not to displace your labours but to supplement them. The Harijan Sevak Sangh will have more than justified its existence if it will be able to serve Harijans properly. Therefore, you can easily understand that the reputation of the Harijan Sevak Sangh depends entirely upon your hands and your own approval.

One thing more I would like to say and that is the same I have been repeating everywhere. That is this. In this movement of purification Harijans will have to play an honourable and valuable part. I repeat that you should all observe, if you have not already been observing, the laws of hygiene and sanitation. It does not mean that all *savarna* Hindus are living in sanitary conditions. As a Harijan by choice, I ask you to rise above these things and purify yourselves, unmindful of what *savarna* Hindus do or what they are. Similarly if there are any Harijans, who are eating carrion and beef, I invite them to give up these habits and, if they have never touched these things, I want them to become missionaries and do propaganda work against such habits. And then comes the drink curse. If you are, or any one of you, addicted to drink, give it up, for drink is a poison. You should not take that poison because many *savarna* Hindus also take poison. You do not want to sink with *savarna* Hindus but you want to swim with them, and if you have developed vigorous arms and can swim well, *savarna* Hindus will also rise; I know for certain that the time is coming in the near future when the Harijans will be able to help *savarna* Hindus out of the mire in which they are falling. Therefore I want every Harijan to work in robust faith.

To *savarna* Hindus I want to say one word. If you do not forget all distinctions of high and low, rid yourselves and your

hearts of untouchability altogether, you and I and the Hindu race will perish. I want you to believe this although thousands of persons may say anything to the contrary. What I say is out of rich experience.

The Hindu, 24-12-1933

406. TESTIMONIAL TO P. M. RAO

December 23, 1933

Shri Poovada Mrityunjaya Rao was most attentive during my day's tour through Guntur District.[1]

M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat: C.W. 9755. Courtesy: Andhra Pavilion in Gandhi Darshan, Delhi, 1969-70

407. SPEECH AT PEDDAPURAM

December 24, 1933

FRIENDS,

Let me tender you my congratulations on the most admirable arrangements made in order to secure a straight passage for me to the meeting place. You can well imagine that I have very limited energy to work my way through pressing crowds. It was therefore most refreshing for me to find here that I had not to push my way through crowds. I thank you for the several addresses and the purse just presented to me and I thank you also for the restraint with which you have refrained from desiring to read those addresses.

You know the purpose of this tour. I want you to join me in driving out the curse of untouchability. I want you to join with me in whole-heartedly believing that untouchability as we practise it can have no religious sanction. The very thought that any single human being can be born untouchable is most debasing. We are too near our own times to notice how Hinduism is disintegrating under the load of this heavy curse and I must repeat here what I have said from a thousand platforms that if untouchability is not removed, Hinduism dies. It therefore gladdens my

[1] Gandhiji had covered Guntur District by car on December 23 in one day.

heart when I see such a large number of people gathering at this meeting and giving their coppers. But I must not detain you and detain myself discoursing on this problem of untouchability.

I have a heavy programme in front of me for the day. I will therefore close by repeating my thanks to you for the admirable arrangements, the addresses and the purse, and by the prayer that God may give us sufficient strength to go through this process of purification.

I would like to give a few brief minutes to the sale of these frames containing the addresses and to the sisters here to discard their precious ornaments. If any of you have not contributed to the purse and desire to pay your share to this purse, you will kindly do so. But now these two frames have suffered a reverse. The glass is broken. Let this be a lesson for the future that no frames are presented to me. I know that Andhra is an artistic province of India. You must therefore discover the artistic and simple method of framing the addresses you present.

The Hindu, 25-12-1933

408. SPEECH AT GOLLAPALEM

December 24, 1933

I first learnt to beg pennies from indentured labourers in South Africa. Such collections have always been charged with refreshing blessings. I cannot recall a single instance of a man or a woman who repented for having given to me. Causes for which I have begged were good. The Harijan cause for which I beg now is undoubtedly the best for which I have begged. I am now inviting *savarna* Hindus to a purificatory rite and to repentance. Whatever little a *savarna* Hindu does for Harijans, he does to uplift himself or herself and Hinduism.

The Bombay Chronicle, 27-12-1933

409. *SPEECH AT RAMACHANDRAPURAM*

December 24, 1933

I am grateful to you for your addresses of welcome[1] and the money you have given me. But what you paid does not satisfy me. I expect more. I am now disposing of the two addresses presented to me in auction.[2]

I congratulate you on the excellent arrangements you have made for holding this meeting. This place is richly endowed by nature; and beautifying things is a special characteristic of nature. By God's grace, you have not spoiled the beauty of nature but maintained it intact. All of you know that you have in your midst an ashram known as the Valmiki Ashram. I have just visited that Ashram, which gives shelter to Harijan boys, and I had the pleasure of hearing the *bhajans* and *keertans* sung by those boys. I was very much impressed by them. They have presented me with a beautiful address in which they ask for your support. The Ashram stands in need of your support—from all of you; it deserves all the support that the people of the taluk give it.

Nature intended all human beings to be equals; but man in his arrogance has created invidious distinctions by classing some as high and some as low. God does not recognize these inequalities. You may see anywhere or anything in nature, but you cannot see this kind of inequality which man has created. So unless you eradicate the evil of untouchability, you cannot establish equality, which is nature's law. I ask you all to join me in my prayer to Almighty to give you strength and courage to eradicate the curse of untouchability entirely. I do not want to detain you longer. If you succeed in collecting any more money among the ladies, you will please bring it to me.

The Hindu, 26-12-1933

[1] Presented by the Ramachandrapuram Taluk Board and the Hindi Premi Mandali

[2] After the auction, Gandhiji's speech in English was translated into Telugu by B. Sambamurti.

410. SPEECH AT RAJAHMUNDRY[1]

December 24, 1933

I would ask you to kindly listen to me for a few moments. I thank you for all these addresses and several purses. It gave me very great pleasure to be able to renew my acquaintance with Rajahmundry and its citizens. You have taught me to expect great things from you and I hope that you will, in this Harijan cause, live up to the expectations that you have raised.

I see here the address presented by the Hindu Samaj. I have gone through its programme that was sent to me. It is an ambitious programme; but no programme whether ambitious or unambitious can possibly be fulfilled without the necessary change of heart amongst the millions of *savarna* Hindus. Untouchability is like a slow poison killing the Hindu body, and even as you cannot sustain a body that is slowly perishing, you will not be able to sustain this perishing Hinduism unless you remove the curse of untouchability.[2]

I am too sorry to have to inform you that it will be impossible for me to go on with my speech unless I secure complete silence on your part. Now by the time you sit down, I propose to do a little bit of work and therefore I propose to put up this address by the Municipality for auction.

The Hindu, 26-12-1933

411. REPLY TO HARIJAN DEPUTATION[3]

RAJAHMUNDRY,
December 24, 1933

One important question that you have raised is that the Harijan Sevak Sangh should be principally manned and managed by you. That shows that you have not followed the pages of the *Hari-*

[1] The speech was translated into Telugu by B. Sambamurti.

[2] At this stage there was some disturbance and commotion in the gathering.

[3] A deputation of Harijans from East Godavari District met Gandhiji at Rajahmundry.

jan. That shows also that you have not understood the origin of the Board. The Board has been formed to enable *savarna* Hindus to do repentance and reparation to you. It is thus a Board of debtors, and you are the creditors. You owe nothing to the debtors, and therefore, so far as this Board is concerned, the initiative has to come from the debtors. You have to certify whether the debtors discharge their obligation or not. What you have to do is to enable and help them to discharge their obligations; that is to say, you can tell them how they can discharge their obligation, you can tell them what in your opinion will satisfy the great body of Harijans. They may or may not accept your advice. If they do not, naturally they run the risk of incurring your displeasure. A debtor may go to a creditor and say to him, 'I have brought so much money, will you take it?' The creditor may say, 'Off you go; I want full payment or none.' Or the creditor may say, 'What you have brought is not part payment, but worse.' All these things you, creditors, can do. And so, when this Board was established and some Harijan friends wrote to me, I told them that Harijans should form themselves into advisory boards or boards of inspection. I want you to understand this distinction thoroughly. You will please see that there is no desire not to accept your advice or co-operation or help. I am only putting before you the true and logical position. This is a period of grace that God has given to caste Hindus, and it is during this period of grace that they have to prove their sincerity. And I am moving heaven and earth and am going about from place to place, simply in order that this obligation on the part of *savarna* Hindus may be fully discharged.

A member of the deputation then suggested that the Board should appoint advisory committees of Harijans of its own selection.

Do not ask the Board to select a committee of Harijans, but select your own committee and say to the Board you have elected these members and it should carry on correspondence with them. There is another danger in the suggestion. There may be factions and divisions among you. Different committees may be appointed by different factions. The Board may recognize all of them. But that will be unfortunate. Let there be no quarrels among you. Present a united front to the debtors. The debtors may put you against one another, though the Board, if it is worth its name, will not do that. The Congress has been able to present a united front. Today, the Congress is full of simple men like you and me. You should have a body of business-like men who will put down

with a strong hand all quarrels among you. Then you will dominate the Board without being on it. Do not be easily satisfied. Tell the debtors you are not going to be satisfied with 5 shillings in the pound but that you must have 20 shillings in the pound. This is not a matter for bargaining.

Harijan, 5-1-1934

412. LETTER TO MARGARETE SPIEGEL

December 25, 1933

CHI. AMALA,

I have your letters. Whatever I did was done out of pure love. That you did not feel the love is my misfortune. Anyway you need not fear a repetition of the performance. You shall develop in your own way. You know what is wanted. You will do it after your style not mine. Only keep your mind and body fit. Do your Hindi in your own fashion. Take care of yourself and your things. Keep your room and yourself tidy. You should select good and easy Hindi books.

Do write fully and freely. Your letters have not hurt me.

I am first class.

Love.

BAPU

Spiegel Papers. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

413. LETTER TO TARABEHN R. MODI

RAJAHMUNDRY,
December 25, 1933

CHI. TARA,

It was good news that the trouble about your teeth is over. Your decision to go to Ahmedabad only after seeing Ramniklal is correct. Now that the complaint about your teeth has disappeared, your health should improve still further. Keep Ramniklal informed. I deliberately don't write to him. From the religious point of view, [my tour] is progressing very well. The

body also gives excellent work. You must write to me twice or thrice a week.

Blessings to all from
BAPU

CHI. TARABEHN MODI
C/O DR. SHANTILAL
REVASHANKAR JHAVERI'S BUNGALOW
SANTA CRUZ

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 4178. Also C.W. 1677. Courtesy: Ramniklal Modi

414. LETTER TO KUSUMBEHN DESAI

RAJAHMUNDRY,
December [*25*,] *1933*[1]

CHI. KUSUM,

I have replied to your letter by wire. You have woken up too late. You stopped writing to me. Every day I hoped I would get a letter from you, but it seems you have resolved not to write. When I got your letter, I already had a long list of recruits. Among them there are three women: Mira, Kisan and Om. In all we are nine. What work do you do at present? How do you spend your time? Does Pyarelal write to you? How is he? Do you read *Harijanbandhu*? My health is fairly good. It can stand travelling all right.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 1849

[1] The source has "December 26". However, Gandhiji was at Rajahmundry on December 25 in the morning and then left for Sitanagaram.

415. LETTER TO RAMABEHN JOSHI

December 25, 1933

CHI. RAMA,

I got your letter. It is certainly good that you try to work with the arm only little by little. There is plenty of other kind of work for you to do.

You should not mind if Dhiru feels unhappy at being separated from you. If his health remains good, he will in time become self-reliant in Bhavnagar. Dudhibehn's company is bound to benefit him. Moreover, Kusum also is there. Let him, therefore, stay on there permanently. It will be enough if you continue to write to him regularly.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 5361

416. LETTER TO KASTURBA GANDHI

December 25, 1933

BA,

You must have got the long letter which I wrote to you last Monday. This Monday we are in Sitanagaram. It is situated on the banks of the Godavari. It is a small village, in Andhradesha, and has an ashram in it. Being a village, it is completely peaceful. We came here in a boat. The river is quite big and, therefore, small steamers can sail on it. We visited Madras and spent three days there. Sastri was of course there. I met Jethalal. Gangabhabhi lives in the city itself. I met Jethalal's wife, too. Both are in good health. Jethalal gets a pay of Rs. 150 and is, therefore, quite happy. I met Urmiladevi's son also. There was a large number of visitors. Lakshmi is quite well. Papa also is in Madras. Lakshmi stayed with me all the three days. She was happy in the company of Mirabehn, Kisan and Om. We shall be meeting once again, for my tour of that part is incomplete. My health is all right. I was again examined by two doctors. There is, therefore, no reason at all for you to worry about me. Have

Dahibehn's teeth improved? Do you get the *Jam-e-Jamshed*? You asked for something like a discourse. I think I must give you one today.

The chapters of the *Gita* recited today were IX, X, XI and XII. In Chapter IX, the Lord says that those who worship Him attain to Him.[1] In Chapter XII, He explains who should be called a *bhakta*.[2] The beauty of the description is that it does not contain any quality which even the most ignorant person cannot cultivate. Any man or woman who strives unaided by another can become a *bhakta* and be one with the Lord. The qualities mentioned are these. The *bhakta* has ill will for nobody but is a friend of all and has compassion for all; he has no feeling of personal attachment towards anything or anybody, is devoid of ego, is equal-minded to happiness and unhappiness and is of a forgiving nature. He is ever contented, is self-controlled and keeps his vows; he has dedicated his mind and reason to God. He causes pain to none and has no fears and worries, desires nothing, is pure in mind and heart and skilful in work, has renounced everything and treats friend and enemy with equal regard, is indifferent to respect and disrespect, bears heat and cold, is unmoved by praise or censure, looks upon wherever he happens to be as his home, that is, has no home of his own, doesn't speak unnecessarily and has a steady mind. Such a person [says the Lord] may be described as my *bhakta*. If all of you reflect over this deeply, you will realize that anybody who wants can become a *bhakta* without help from any other person.

Blessings to all from
BAPU

[From Gujarati]
Bapuna Bane Patro, pp. 3-4

[1] IX. 29
[2] XII. 13 to 20

417. LETTER TO VALLABHBHAI PATEL

SITANAGARAM,
December 25, 1933

BHAI VALLABHBHAI,

You waited for a letter from me and I waited for one from you. I was under the impression that I had not received a reply to my letter. We are touring with such speed that I can't remember dates or days. I don't remember, even, to whom I have to write and what. That I am past sixty may also be one reason for this.

Chandrashankar has unnecessarily alarmed you about [my rising] at three. If I did not get up at that hour, I would feel very uneasy. You should insist, rather, on my going to bed early. That rule is certainly not being observed just now. Still, all the doctors tell me that my health has remained very good so far. Nor do I write as many letters as you think I do. I write only such letters as I must. If you were with me, you also would press me to write some of them. I must admit that your complaint that I left you alone [in jail] is just. But the problem will be solved by and by, I am sure. Stop worrying about me completely. I don't overstep the limits of my health. If you saw how I work, you would admit that I was taking very good care of it. Or truly speaking I should say that God has been preserving it. What would He do, however, if I opposed Him? That He has been saving me from serious dangers is a sign that I have lost myself in Him. In Madras I was in danger every day of getting crushed, but I was saved. That was not man's doing. It was God's will. The rule about five hours has been observed mostly on paper only.

I will certainly write to Ba every week. So far I have not let a single week pass. God will keep her firm. Who else can do that? There is no cause at all for worrying about Mani.

I had sent a wire immediately to Kanjibhai[1], and I had received a reply both by wire and letter. I have again replied by letter and said that he should not come thus far for my sake. If, however, he himself thought it necessary to come, he might cer-

[1] Kanhaiyalal Desai of Surat

tainly do so. I have even given him [convenient] dates. I forgot to mention all this in my letter to you. His letter was a fine one.

I think it will be difficult to meet Raja, though Lakshmi saw me in Madras. She is running the sixth month and cannot, therefore, move about freely. She keeps good health. Raja wants the delivery to take place under his care. Devdas also will go to Madras. Lakshmi was in good spirits. Raja will be released on 6th February.

. . .'s [1] condition is the same that it has been. He is discontented with himself. He is miserable because . . .[2] is again pregnant. He cannot exercise self-control and afterwards he feels unhappy. I have tried my best to comfort him. But on the whole he is better where he is.

Princess Aristarchi writes to me every week without fail. She sends money too. There is no limit to her kindness. She is now helping Trivedi's Manu. . . .[3] I have written to the Princess and requested her to explain to him his duty. It is true that Manilal and Sorabji[4] are quarrelling with each other. Their quarrel is about the policy to be followed there. I couldn't advise either of them in this quarrel. But I have written to Manilal and told him that he should follow what seems right to him, without departing from civility. I have advised him not to make the quarrel a personal affair. I believe their differences will be resolved.

Gordhanbhai continues to write about Vithalbhai's donation. I have not read all that he has written. I will take a suitable opportunity to reply to him and then keep quiet. I had a very sweet letter from Subhas. I did send it to the Press. I am sure it must have been printed.

The tour is going on very well. There is no heart-burning anywhere. So far I have not met people in the South bent on creating trouble. About the future, God alone knows. The crowds are as large as ever. We are in Sitanagaram today. There is perfect peace here. This is a small village. Today is my silence day. Tomorrow also I shall be here. If I had not got these two days at one place, it would have been difficult for me to go on with the tour.

I met Sastri[5] in Madras for an hour or so. It was just a

[1] & [2] The names are omitted in the source.
[3] Omission as in the source
[4] Son of Parsee Rustomji
[5] V. S. Srinivasa Sastri

friendly meeting. Munshi[1] and Lilavati[2] came and saw me there. Munshi seemed to be in good health. There was a wire from Bhulabhai. He has not recovered completely.

Kaka and Surendra Mashruwala are in Gujarat.

Kishorelal has still not recovered. Swami is in a place between Sanoli and Bombay. I suppose you hear about him.

Have I told you that Kisan is in the party with me? She is a very good young woman. Being a friend of Prema, she couldn't but be so.

Blessings to all from
BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro–2: Sardar Vallabhbhaine, pp. 53-7

418. LETTER TO CHHAGANLAL JOSHI

December 25, 1933

CHI. CHHAGANLAL,

I started to write a long letter to you, and dictated a page of this size. That was in Jabalpur. Then I could not proceed further with that letter. And now I am writing this one. It is the night of silence day, in Sitanagaram. The silence is not yet over. I will break it at 9.30 p.m. It is 8.30 p.m. only. It is not incorrect to say that I can write only on Mondays and Tuesdays. I always get up at three in the morning and write what I can between then and prayer-time. I may, of course, be interrupted even during that period. When I am in a train, sometimes, I cannot even get up at three.

I am having a wonderful experience during this tour. The crowds are larger than they used to be in the past. But these numbers may easily deceive us, for we have to reach crores of people. Nor is it that all the people who come immediately change their way of living. The only consolation is the thought that this propaganda does not seem to displease all these hundreds of thousands. We can therefore hope that sooner or later the practice of untouchability will disappear completely.

You should make your study of the *Gita* thorough in every respect. You should master both the grammatical construction and the literal meaning of the verses. I am sure you can recite

[1] & [2] K. M. Munshi and his wife

the verses with correct pronunciation of the words. Again, the other reading may be limited in extent but it should be deep. A person who digests one book knows more than another who reads a thousand without digesting any of them. Do you have a spinning-wheel with you? Wardha seems to have agreed with Vimu and Rama in every way. Rama's hand may become completely all right. Dhiru seems to be happy in Bhavnagar, but we cannot still feel that the problem about him is solved. He is still weak, but his health is much better than it used to be. Dudhibehn does of course look after him carefully. Kusum also is there. Nanabhai, too, takes care of him. Balabhadra is very happy there.

Appa Patwardhan has come here to see me. He will leave now. Kisan has joined me from Wardha. She is a friend of Prema and is a very good young woman. She has, however, become a little weak physically.

Chandrashankar is carrying the burden of two journals quite well. This time Thakkar Bapa's place is taken by Malkani. The work is going on well. Ramnarayan also is helping. Kishorelal has been ill and suffering a good deal. He has been getting fever and it does not leave him. Brijkrishna also was seriously ill. He is improving now. His life was actually in danger. But, then, is there anyone of whom that is not true? However, people who are not so ill that they have to remain in bed do not think that their lives are in danger.

Ba is having a holiday in Yeravda, so to say. Dahibehn's[1] teeth are giving her trouble. Shanta and Lalita are quite well. Dwarkanath seems to be managing the affair at Wardha fairly efficiently. And there is also Lakshmibehn who, as you know, has identified herself with the Ashram. Kaka and Surendra Mashruwala are in Gujarat.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 5314

[1] Wife of Raojibhai Nathabhai Patel

419. LETTER TO DUDHIBEHN V. DESAI

December 25, 1933

CHI. DUDHIBEHN,

I have not heard from you for some time. You should write to me regularly. For my part I may not be able to write to you sometimes in all this rushing about of the tour.

Look after all the children. You should not forsake your duty towards Kusum because of anything that Jamna might say or write to you regarding her. Even if Kusum loves adornment I would not let her satisfy her desire. That is my weakness. As for you I cannot imagine that you could love adornment. Ask the children to write to me. I am not writing separately to them this time.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C.W. 3190. Courtesy: Valji G. Desai

420. LETTER TO VIDYA R. PATEL

December 25, 1933

CHI. VIDYA,

I got your letter. I am glad that you have improved, even if it was with the help of medicine. What we want is that you should improve, no matter how. Write to Manu from time to time.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C.W. 9636. Courtesy: Ravindra R. Patel

421. LETTER TO VIDYA A. HINGORANI

December 25, 1933

CHI. VIDYA,

I got your letter. It is good you have gone to Father's. I shall send you out when you are physically fit. I prefer Wardha but if you would rather go to Bhavnagar, I shall send you there. Now at least you should improve your health, do some physical labour, give up worrying and crying. Learn English and Hindi. Go on writing to me.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a microfilm of the Hindi: Courtesy: National Archives of India and Anand T. Hingorani

422. LETTER TO JAWAHARLAL NEHRU

December 26, 1933

MY DEAR JAWAHARLAL,

Here is a cutting from the *M. Mail*[1]. Though the whole conversation practically referred to you and your views, naturally the interviewer could not reproduce it all. I was shown the proof. It is a fair presentation of the substance of what I said. Please read it carefully and correct me where you find me to have erred about yourself. There is a great deal of misunderstanding about you in our circles too. But it does not worry me.

You will find also the programme[2] so far as it goes.

I hope Mother is progressing.

Love.

BAPU

Gandhi-Nehru Papers, 1933. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

[1] *Vide* "Interview to *Madras Mail*", pp. 382-5.

[2] *Vide* Appendix IV.

423. LETTER TO RAIHANA TYABJI

December 26, 1933

DEAR DAUGHTER RAIHANA,

I had no idea that you were confined to bed. I thought: 'Raihana has now forgotten Bapu.' As for me I had no time when I could write. It is God's grace that you are now all right.[1]

I had a long letter from Hamida. I have replied to her. Kamaladevi and I talked about many things. I have often thought about you during the tour. I yearned to hear you sing: "Arise, awake, O Traveller", but how could I hope for such good fortune? I even felt the wish to join your band singing *bhajans*. My party includes Kisan and Jamnalalji's Om. Where has Father gone? Give my sincere greetings, *vandemataram*, love, etc., etc., to him and to Mother. Blessings to Saroj[2] and you, and a kiss to Kamalmian.

BAPU

[PS.]

I hope you read *Harijan* regularly.

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 9655

424. LETTER TO KALYANJI V. MEHTA

December 26, 1933

BHAI KALYANJI,

Does death spare anybody? Who knows what our plight would be without that friend? I want all of you, and particularly Napoleon[3] to console yourself with the thought that her death was release for Gangaba. Who would listen to this philosophy of mine on such an occasion? But my wisdom about death is not derived from Shastras only and, therefore, I offer such consolation on all occasions of death. Soldiers like us ought to

[1] Up to this the letter is in Urdu.

[2] Saroj Nanavati

[3] Chhotubhai K. Mehta, son of Kunvarji Mehta

know its true nature. There can be no doubt that Gangaba's soul rests in peace. No evil can ever befall one who had struggled even a little to be good while living. Mahalakshmi's malaria can be cured with proper treatment.

Blessings from

BAPU

KALYANJI MEHTA
C/O DR. NATHUBHAI DAYALJI PATEL
BACK VIEW
OPPOSITE CHARNI ROAD STATION GARDEN
BOMBAY

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./XXII

425. LETTER TO SWARUPRANI NEHRU

December 26, 1933

DEAR SISTER,

I was happy to receive your letter. Well, we cannot expect now to regain full strength, but you have no longer any reason for worry. Krishna is happy. Ask Sarup to write to me occasionally, Krishna too should write. Does she plan to stay there for a few months?

May God give you peace.

My tour is progressing satisfactorily though it is quite taxing. By the grace of God the body has withstood it so far. Ba's letters keep coming. She is cheerful.

Yours,

MOHANDAS

[From Hindi]

Indira Gandhi-Gandhi Papers. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Also G. N. 11407

426. SPEECH AT PUBLIC MEETING, ELLORE

December 27, 1933

I wish to thank you all for this great reception which is an exhibition of your great affection. I thank you for the various purses and addresses including one from the Municipality and another from the District Board. You will not expect me to refer to the details of the various addresses in the too short time before me.

My first and sacred duty is to unveil the portrait of the "Lion of the Punjab", the late Lala Lajpat Rai. You will not expect me to recount before you his many valuable qualities and services. I had the privilege of enjoying his confidence till he died. He was the President of the historic session of the Congress in 1920. Today to me and to you the one outstanding quality of his is his unadulterated love for the untouchables. He has taught Hindu India to keep to its sense of duty to the so-called untouchables, the Harijans. Lajpat Rai always proclaimed that untouchability was the greatest blot on Hinduism. If he had done nothing else, we, Hindus, should revere his sacred memory for his war against untouchability. Who can deny his services to the country, his bravery and his fearlessness? It was not by an idle epithet that he was called the "Lion of the Punjab".

I must pass on to other things. You will be pleased to know that Mulpuri Chukkamma even from Vellore Jail thought of Harijans and out of her poor belongings she sent me this ring. Her letter bearing the signature of the Superintendent of the Central Jail is here with me. Who can help deriving inspiration from such acts?[1]

Wherever I go, I find evidence of enthusiasm on the part of the people, readiness on their part to open out their hearts to the so-called untouchables, the Harijans. Wherever I go, I find a readiness on the part of the people to part with their possessions, to part with their coppers, with their silver, with their gold and women are not behind men in making their sacrifices. I know for certain that they know for what purpose they have

[1] What follows is from *The Hindu*, 29-12-1933.

given their bangles or their rings or whatever they hold very dear. They know that all these moneys and all these ornaments are being given in order that Harijans may be served. This cause, the more I think about it the more I feel, is a cause for all humanity and for all time. If Hindus succeed in exorcizing this devil of untouchability, if they succeed in transforming their hearts and if they succeed in purifying themselves of this blot, I have no doubt whatsoever that we, all the communities belonging to different religions, will live in happiness, contentment, peace and real friendship of the heart. I have no doubt whatsoever that, if we achieve full success in this mission, in this war against untouchability, as I have said, I have no doubt that we shall be able to achieve the heart unity. Suspicions will melt away before the sunshine of mutual trust, mutual affection and mutual respect. Let us, therefore, you and I and all, pray to God Almighty that He may bless us with sufficient strength and wisdom to see this error and correct it, no matter what it was. Let us remember that all these centuries we have suppressed a portion of ourselves and in so doing we have degraded ourselves, and we have depressed ourselves. No power on earth has yet succeeded in suppressing any portion of humanity without degrading itself and without depressing itself. The more I see, the more I feel that, if we do not drive away this untouchability, Hinduism itself will perish and it will be a loss not only to us but it will be a loss to the world. A religion that owes its inspiration to the Vedas, to the Upanishads, to the Puranas, to *Ramayana*, why should that religion perish—for what purpose, for what reason, except that we did not observe the message of the Upanishads, that we did not observe the grand message, the grand proposition enunciated in the pages of the Vedas, the Upanishads that God alone is and no one else and nothing else? Do you suppose the preachers of that one God, God of Justice, preached that there could be any divisions of high and low amongst ourselves? It is an impossible thing. The more one thinks about these things, the more it is surprising that a people so cultured as Hindus are supposed to be, should have hugged untouchability as a part of their religion. And remember lastly that all the religions in the world are today in the melting pot. They are all being critically examined and tested and public opinion will not forgive you and me if we do not energetically drive away this evil from our midst. I must not now take any more of your time on untouchability.[1]

[1] The following is from *The Hindu*, 28-12-1933.

Mr. Gandhi then said that as he was speaking at Ellore, the head-quarters of the Andhra Provincial Anti-untouchability Association, he wished to draw attention to the fact that he had received some complaints against some of its office-bearers. Mr. Gandhi said that he and Mr. Thakkar, the vigilant Secretary of the Central Board, found after investigation that there was absolutely no foundation for the charges made. He always kept his eyes and ears open for receiving any *bona-fide* complaints, but he insisted that anybody who complained should do so on two conditions. Firstly, he must announce his name to the public instead of sending anonymous letters and secondly he must substantiate all his allegations by unimpeachable evidence.

Mr. Gandhi delivered his speech in English and before closing he said that it was a great regret to him to have done so, even in Andhradesha where Hindi had progressed very much. He had to speak in English to facilitate translation. It would not at all be difficult for the Andhras to learn Hindi as many of the words were derived from Sanskrit out of which the Telugu language was formed.

The Hindu, 28-12-1933 and 29-12-1933

427. SPEECH AT WOMEN'S MEETING, VIZAGAPATAM

December 28, 1933

The Harijan cause is like fire. The more ghee you put into fire, the more it requires. So also, the more you give to the Harijan cause, the more it requires. Those who give to the cause gain, they never lose; and those who do not give undoubtedly lose. What you gain by giving is merit. What you lose by not giving is your self. For men and women belonging to *savarna* Hindu castes have been persecuting Harijans now for ages. And if we are just now passing through evil times, I am convinced that our treatment of Harijans has not a little to do with it. I have, therefore, been asking the women of India to drive away the ghost of untouchability from their hearts. It is wrong, it is sinful, to consider some people lower than ourselves. On God's earth nobody is low and nobody is high. We are all His creatures; and just as in the eyes of parents all their children are absolutely equal, so also in God's eyes all His creatures must be equal. Therefore I ask you to believe me when I tell you that there is no sanction in religion for untouchability. I would, therefore, ask you to give a place in your hearts to all the Harijans around you. Welcome Harijan children in your own homes. Go to Harijan quarters and look after their children and their homes; speak to Harijan women as to your own sisters.

This cause of Harijans is essentially for the women of India to tackle; and I hope that you, the Hindu women of this place, will do your duty. I hope those of you, who have the wish and the ability to surrender all or any part of your jewellery, will do so. There is one condition attached to the gift. If you give anything whatsoever, it must not be replaced. I want you to feel that you personally have given something to this cause, which you cannot do when you give rupees or notes. For they come from either your parents or your husbands. But jewellery is your own property. When you surrender your jewellery without any intention of having it replaced by your parents or husbands, it is definitely your own sacrifice. I want you all who have understood the spirit of the message I have delivered to you to make that definite sacrifice.

Harijan, 5-1-1934

428. SPEECH AT PUBLIC MEETING, VIZAGAPATAM

December 28, 1933

You drove me today, on my alighting at the station, through a row of Harijans who were being fed at that time through the charity of some townsman. Whilst he may be entitled to thanks for his liberality, I must confess that it was not a soul-stirring scene. I hung my head in shame as the car was driven through the road along which Harijan men and women were feeding. Just imagine how you and I would feel if some insolent person drove his car through the road where we were taking our meals. I know the custom under which caste dinners are given. All traffic along the road on which dinners are given is entirely prohibited, so that it is possible for diners to have their meals and to be served in perfect peace. As I have said repeatedly, this movement of purification goes down to the roots of our hearts. I have not asked *savarna* Hindus to appear as patrons before Harijans and throw the leavings of their dishes to them. But I have invited them to open out their hearts to Harijans and to find there a sanctuary for them. But what I saw today was like the act of a patron towards his dependents. And do you know, not only my car was driven through the rows of people taking meals, but other cars followed and the crowd also followed these cars. And I noticed that it was a hard thing for those poor people to protect their food from dust blowing on it. It was not, to say

the least, a becoming performance. And you can now understand my grief at having been obliged to witness it.

I know there was no evil intention behind this act. I know also that there was not a single person who had any desire to insult these Harijans who were given free meals. I understand also that those who took me through that road thought it would please me to drive through the rows of Harijans taking meals. I know it was nothing but simple thoughtlessness. As we have been told by Shastras, to live a religious life is like walking on the edge of a sword. And in a worldwide movement like this of self-purification among millions of human beings, a single thoughtless act takes the shape of sin. Every act of ours, therefore, in connection with this Harijan movement has to be dictated and dominated by punctiliousness, extreme caution and inward searching. Having witnessed this scene, I thought it would be wrong on my part not to make a public reference to it. By drawing your attention to it, I have endeavoured to warn the public taking part in this movement of self-purification against a repetition of the scene of this morning.

This brings me to what we are doing today through the length and breadth of India. I have not the shadow of a doubt that untouchability is an unmitigated curse on Hinduism. If the Shastras represent the will and wish of God, there can be no warrant whatsoever in them for untouchability, for which you find no parallel in any part of the world save India. It is bad enough when dictated by selfish motives to consider ourselves high and other people low. But it is not only worse but a double wrong when we tack religion to an evil like untouchability. It, therefore, grieves me when learned pundits come forward and invoke the authority of the Shastras for a patent evil like untouchability. I have said, and I repeat today, that we, Hindus, are undergoing a period of probation. Whether we desire it or not, untouchability is going. But if during this period of probation we repent for the sin, if we reform and purify ourselves, history will record that one act as a supreme act of purification on the part of the Hindus. But if, through the working of the time spirit, we are compelled to do things against our will and Harijans come to their own, it will be no credit to the Hindus or to Hinduism. But I go a step further and say that if we fail in this trial, Hinduism and Hindus will perish.

Harijan, 5-1-1934

429. NOTES

Some Questions

It is wonderful how the very same questions are being asked again and again at the different places visited by me and this by those whom one would expect to be readers of *Harijan* or otherwise to be acquainted with what I have said on those questions. But so long as they continue to be asked, I suppose I must deal with them and hope that the readers who are familiar with them will not mind the trespass on these columns. I need not repeat the questions. The following answers will suggest the kind of questions asked.

1. There can be no compulsion in the matter of temple-entry.
2. No temple will be opened to Harijans without the approval of a clear majority of trustees or an overwhelming majority of persons believing in temple worship and entitled to use the temple in question for purposes of worship.
3. There is no compulsion whatever in the Temple-entry Bill or the Anti-untouchability Bill. Harijans should be subject to the same rules of admission as are applicable to the other Hindus.
4. If anybody satisfies me that the Shastras enjoin untouchability as it is observed today, I shall at once give up the agitation.
5. But my settled conviction is that modern untouchability is an inhuman institution having its root in selfishness and the desire for exploitation of fellow-beings found to be amenable to suppression.
6. The untouchables are made and unmade by census enumerators and commissioners as has been abundantly proved in these pages.

No Toys Please

Andhradesha easily beats other provinces in presenting toys and the like. Some produce little silver cups, some trays, some other fancy things not easily portable. I cannot induce buyers on the spot to bid for numerous things and however tempting they may be for the cause, they become a nuisance to carry and keep count of. I would, therefore, advise organizers to discounte-

nance, if not forbid, such gifts. In several places heavy frames and portraits have been presented. They become a positive burden and are unsalable in the market. On no account should frames be presented. I would like the tour to retain its serious character and be business-like involving little or no waste in any matter. I may mention incidentally that, in presenting purses, bank-notes should be used wherever possible, instead of coins. In swift travelling, covering ten to fifteen places in a day, it is difficult to count all the cash from day to day and keep accurate accounts. In any case, the accountants, devoted though they are, are over-worked and often have to keep late hours in order to keep themselves up to date. Big organizations like the All-India Harijan Sevak Sangh cannot be efficiently and yet cheaply conducted without attention to minutest details and without the intelligent co-operation of the workers and volunteers taking part in it.

Harijan, 29-12-1933

430. MARWARI RELIEF SOCIETY

This Society was established in Calcutta in 1923. In the report on the flood-relief work in Orissa sent by Sjt. Harakhchand and published in the *Harijan Sevak*, there is a mention of this Society's valuable services. On my way to Bezwada from Delhi the other day, some workers of the above Society met me at Palwal station. They are helping the flood victims in the district of Gurgaon. At the station they gave me a report containing a detailed account of their work and told me: 'If you read this, you will know that we made no distinction between untouchables and others; in fact we paid special attention to the poor helpless Harijans.' The account of the services rendered from November 19, 1933 to December 13, 1933 is to be found in this report. The Society's volunteers worked in 144 villages. They distributed 2,809 quilts, 1,846 shirts, 1,256 skirts and 872 maunds, 5 seers of grain among 4,098 flood victims. They distributed medicines to 3,052 patients suffering from itch, cholera, cough and other maladies. Wherever needed, the sick were given milk, barley, sago and other things. Houses damaged by floods are being rebuilt. The Society is working in seven places: Palwal, Dighout, Bannikheda, Banchari, Hodal, Hasanpur and Gulabad. I thank the Society and the young volunteers who are working in the above seven places. The number of Harijans and non-Hindus helped by the Society is also separately given in the report. As long as this

pernicious tendency towards discriminating between man and man persists, even in times of common relief operations, so long, unfortunately, separate mention of Hindus, Harijans and non-Hindus is and will continue to be necessary in this unfortunate land.

[From Hindi]

Harijan Sevak, 29-12-1933

431. LETTER TO MANU GANDHI

December 29, 1933

CHI. MANUDI,

I felt happy after reading your long letter. I daily think about you. Tell Kusum that I cannot help her now. What will it avail her to think of me? Let her go on repeating Ramanama. It will give her peace of mind. You should teach her to do that. Sing the Ramadhun to her. You can sing many *bhajans*. What can I say to comfort aunt Bali? If I were free from other duties, I would go to her and help her run her home and free her from her worries. But it is impossible during this life that I can even stand in such relation to her. What you write about death is perfectly true. It will come to all of us sooner or later.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C.W. 2664. Courtesy: Manubehn S. Mashruwala

432. LETTER TO MARGARETE SPIEGEL

December 30, 1933

CHI. AMALA,

Let us be natural. You should write when you feel like writing and let me write when I can spare a moment. Not a day passes when I do not think of you. I am glad you are making steady progress. I would like you to feel perfectly safe and free from nervousness. You should tell me all about your pupils. Do you see Ramdas and his wife often?

Love.

BAPU

[PS.]

I am keeping excellent health, diet remaining the same.

Spiegel Papers. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

433. LETTER TO RUKMINIDEVI BAZAJ

December 31, 1933

CHI. RUKMINI,

I got your postcard. You do not seem to have received the postcard I wrote to you on my way here. I have had no letters from Santok for some time. You did well in meeting Jamnalalji. Have you learnt the Marwari speech? I am sure you have acquired perfect command over Hindi now. Besides Om, Kisanbehn is accompanying me. Has Om written to you about her? She is a friend of Premabehn's. I have caught cold.

Blessings to you both from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 9156

434. LETTER TO KASTURBA GANDHI

CUDDAPAH STATION,
January 1, 1934

BA,

Send me a copy of the discourse I sent you last time.[1] I got your letter only today. I am writing this letter on my silence day. Do not worry about Manilal. I am sending your letter to him. You need not get alarmed by what Pragji said. Both are mature persons. If they have made a mistake they will correct it. Arrangement has already been made for *Jame-e-Jamshed*. Mathuradas informs me that this has been done, and so I have done nothing further about it. I hope you get it now. All the same, I am inquiring again. I will try about the *Ramayana* and the *Bhagavata*. Don't feel the slightest hesitation in writing to Premlilabehn for anything you want. After all, what are you likely to want? What few things you want she will send with great love. But about anything which you do not require immediately, it will be enough if you write to me. I will then make the necessary arrangements. Can you use your dentures? Do you gargle with potassium permanganate water? Thakkar Bapa is not in the party with me this time. He will meet me on the 15th. Just now Malkani is with me. He also is working very hard, along with the others. Chandrashankar keeps fairly good health. Om and Kisan are taking good care of their health. Om works as hard as she can. She is a simple-hearted and straightforward girl. And so is Kisan. Surendra has regained his strength.

The Andhra tour ends on the 3rd. After that we shall go to Mysore. Wherever I go, there is bound to be a lot of activity and some hardships too. But I am carefully protected by everybody and so don't feel the hardships much. As Mirabehn looks after the smallest detail, I don't feel the discomfort of travelling at all. You will be permitted to receive a letter from me every week only if you forgo your right of receiving visitors. I for one will go on sending a discourse every week. Be satisfied with visitors who come to see the other women. However, do as you

[1] *Vide* p. 398.

wish. If you are keen on having visitors, there would be many ready to go. They would even wish to go. We have deliberately made it a practice to receive the fewest possible visitors. But let me know your wish without any hesitation. Janakibehn is all right. I think I have already written to you about her son Ramakrishna's tonsils being removed. Kamala has now resumed solid foods. Kishorelal is still not free from fever. But there is no cause for worry. These days my silence commences on Sunday night. I, therefore, don't speak till Monday night. The silence will be broken today at ten minutes past nine. Hence I shall hardly have to speak to anybody, since soon after it will be time to go to bed. I have to get up at three in the morning. Brijkrishna's fever has come down. But he has yet to regain strength. Hemibehn is no more. Now the discourse.

Last time I wrote about the attributes of a *bhakta*. I also explained that there could be no *bhakti* without service. This time I will write about how one can serve, since people frequently ask me that question. Some say that service is possible only under certain conditions. Some others that it is possible only after certain studies. I explained last week that these were wrong notions. One can serve under any conditions. If we offer up to Shri Krishna all our gifts and possessions, we shall get full marks. Anybody who can give one crore but gives only half a crore, will not get more than 50 marks. But he who has only one pie and gives it will get 100 marks. If, therefore, you and the other women prisoners there behave in this manner towards the women with whom you come into contact or towards the officials, you are fufilling the dharma of service. Behaving towards the officials in the spirit of service means never wishing them ill, showing them due respect and not deceiving them. All the rules should be obeyed and the women undergoing imprisonment for criminal offences should be treated as if they were your blood-sisters. If you let them feel your love and see your purity of heart, that also will mean practising the dharma of service. In both cases one's motives must be clean. If a person behaves in a good way with a selfish motive or through fear, his actions cannot be reckoned as service. We often see one person doing a thing with a selfish motive and another doing the same thing with a benevolent motive. There can be no room for self-interest in anything done as an offering to the Lord. One who serves in this manner daily gains more strength. His studies and his work, both are inspired by the motive of service. Even the laughing or playing, eating or drinking of a person who is thus dedicated to service

are informed with the spirit of service. All his actions, therefore, will be innocent. The Lord always gives to such *bhaktas* the strength they need. You probably remember the three verses in the women's prayer which have a bearing on this. They are as follows:

> As for those who worship Me, thinking on Me alone and nothing else, ever attached to me, I bear the burden of getting them what they need.[1]
>
> With Me in their thoughts, their whole soul devoted to Me, teaching one another, with Me ever on their lips, they live in contentment and joy.[2]
>
> To these, ever in tune with Me, worshipping Me with affectionate devotion, I give the power of selfless action, whereby they come to Me![3]

Refer to the *Anasaktiyoga* for the meaning of these verses. You will find them in Chapters 9 and 10. Remember that we read the *Gita* to put its teaching into practice. All that I have said above is, you should know, on the basis of the *Gita*.

Blessings to all from
BAPU

[From Gujarati]
Bapuna Bane Patro, pp. 4-6

435. LETTER TO PRABHAVATI

January 1, 1934

CHI. PRABHAVATI,

I could not reply to your letter earlier. I get the time only at 3 a.m. or when I am travelling in a train. This I am writing in a train. There is no question of your doing anything else till you have completely recovered your health. If Father can spare money, you certainly need not hesitate to ask him for help. I don't know how he is financially placed at present. You should ask him and find out. One need not hesitate to ask one's father about his financial condition. If he is not in a position to give you any help, you may let me know. I will make some arrangement immediately.

[1], [2] & [3] *Bhagavad Gita*, IX. 22, X. 9 and 10; *vide* Vol. XXXII, pp. 283 and 288.

I wrote the above in the train. I will now complete the reply.

I hope Jayaprakash is benefiting from the treatment. You have not told me in your letter how both of you meet your expenses, nor what steps have been taken regarding the debt.

I am in good health. There has been no change in my diet. I have not been weighed lately but I think the weight must have increased. Mirabehn's health is fairly good. She doesn't do anything except looking after me. She doesn't attend meetings. Om and Kisan help her. They attend meetings sometimes. Kisan's health is improving. Ramnarayan doesn't seem to be keeping well. He will carry on as long as he can.

Ba writes to me from time to time. Rama, Ranchhodbhai's[1] daughter, has got married. She and her husband came to me at Ellore for my blessings. I have not heard from Manibehn at all.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 3438

436. LETTER TO MANILAL AND SUSHILA GANDHI

January 1, 1934

CHI. MANILAL AND SUSHILA,

I have not yet received the letter which is due from you. I hope you got the long letters which I wrote to you. Ba is worrying about you a great deal in jail. She has been upset by some things that Pragji has said. She believes that you, Manilal, have quarrelled with everybody there. I do not believe this, of course. I merely write what Ba has written to me. She has asked me to convey her exact words. Since she is in jail and can write only one letter, I naturally feel that I should satisfy her wishes, whatever they are. That is the only reason why I have mentioned this.

I keep very good health. The details are always given in *Harijan.*

Nanabhai continues to be in poor health. Kishorelal has been having fever for a long time and it does not go. I inquire and get reports about him regularly. I trust he will be all right in a few days.

[1] Ranchhodlal Sheth, a mill-owner of Ahmedabad

Santok's mother has passed away. Kashi's sister, Hemi, is also dead. Devdas is well. After his release, he will go to Madras to be with Lakshmi at the time of her delivery.

I don't think it is necessary for me now to write anything about the differences among you there.

Om has made a copy of Ba's letter and so I am sending the original to you. Earlier I had intended to send it to Ramdas.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 4813

437. LETTER TO PESTONJI

January 1, 1934

BHAI PESTONJI,

Kakasaheb has written a special letter to me about you. I shall certainly be happy if you join me. If you find it convenient, you may complete the whole tour. Our mode of living is, of course, simple. We travel by third class and work hard day and night. We have to do physical work and make do with whatever food and accommodation we get. If you are physically strong and if your mode of living is simple, you will feel no hardship. If you have the courage, come and have this experience. I would certainly welcome a young man of your ability and straightforwardness. Send a wire if you decide to come. We shall be touring in Mysore State for about seven days. If, therefore, you come, buy a ticket for Bangalore. You will know there where I am touring. Send a telegram to me at Bangalore. I will get it wherever I am and will make the necessary arrangements. Someone will meet you at Bangalore station. You will not be stranded even if the telegram does not reach me.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 8046

438. *LETTER TO SURENDRA MASHRUWALA*

January 1, 1934

CHI. SURENDRA,

I learn that you started crying and returned to Bombay out of fear of being beaten. There is no reason for you to feel upset or ashamed about it. Have you not read how scared I used to be at the age of seventeen or eighteen? I would however also advise you not to go to jail out of a false sense of shame. This time a few will have to go to jail repeatedly. If on examining yourself you now wish to return home, you may do so. Serve there, and go to jail when God prompts you and gives you full courage. Remember that God always gives the strength to bear physical pain to those who have surrendered themselves completely to Him. But such strength is not acquired by thinking. It is a gift from God, which His devotees invariably receive. Follow the course which you find the easiest for yourself. Write to me.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C.W. 1527. Courtesy: Manubehn S. Mashruwala

439. *LETTER TO VIDYA A. HINGORANI*

January 1, 1934

CHI. VIDYA,

I have your letter. It is not a reply to my letter. Perhaps you got it late.

I was of course confident that Kakaji would send you a reply and that too a good one.

If you have to go to Karachi, then do travel alone in daytime. Do not fear anyone. Have faith that God is there to protect us. I want to see you fearless, industrious, sociable and physically strong. And I have no doubt that you can be.

How is Mahadev? How much milk does he take? Does he trouble you now? Do you take him for outing?

What is the news about Anand? What do you study? Read Hindi books daily. Study English also as much as possible.

Blessings from
BAPU

[PS.]

Multan is near to you. It would be good if you meet Devdas. But meet him only when you really wish to. He is in the New Central Jail. Om [and] Kisan are well.

From a microfilm of the Hindi: Courtesy: National Archives of India and Anand T. Hingorani

440. LETTER TO LAKSHMI GANDHI

January 1, 1934

CHI. LAKSHMI,

Though we could not talk much, your three days' stay brought me satisfaction. Your depression ought to disappear. I am enclosing a copy of the letter received from Ba. Read it if you can and send it on to Devdas.

Ask Papa[1] to write to me. A letter for Anna[2] accompanies this.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 2003

441. LETTER TO BRIJKRISHNA CHANDIWALA

January 1, 1934

CHI. BRAJKRISHNA,

What is this? I got a wire but no letter followed it. The wire being reassuring I take it that you are now wholly free from fever. But I want a letter with all the facts. Do send me a wire first if you have not written already. It will be all right to address it to Bangalore, rather Bangalore City. We are all well.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 2405

[1] Addressee's sister

[2] C. Rajagopalachari; the letter is not available.

442. *LETTER TO VALLABHBHAI PATEL*

CUDDAPAH (ANDHRA),
January 2, 1934

BHAI VALLABHBHAI,

Today I am writing this letter at 3.20 [a.m.]. After cleaning my teeth, I thought of you first. I find this the most quiet time for writing. I will of course have a nap during the day. Today also there will be no touring. Please don't worry about me at all. I really keep good health.

Since you don't write about yourself, I wonder whether you are keeping back anything from me. Please don't.

I have been writing to Ba every week and will continue to do so. As desired by her, I send her some discourses on the *Gita* just as I used to do from Yeravda Mandir.

Mahadev is now permitted to write and receive only one letter. He tries to include several in one. He will get others' letters through Jivanji. He is being tested severely indeed. I am sure he will get an M.A. degree even in this. He is buried in the translation of the *Gita*.

You know Kishorelal's condition. He refuses to part with his fever. He himself has now appointed a committee consisting of Nath[1], Swami and Gomati. He will abide by their advice.

I got a letter from Ba yesterday. Om made copies of it, one of which I am sending to you. Om is a very active girl. Besides, she is eager to learn everything as quickly as she can. Being frank and truthful, she is progressing very well. Kisan's health is not as good as it used to be. Otherwise she also is a hard worker. Both the girls are extremely simple in their habits. They have become intimate friends.

Radhakant Malaviya came yesterday to see me. He has brought with him a scheme for preserving milk in dry ice and wants my help in carrying it out. But to ask for my help in such an enterprise is as futile as to churn sand for butter. Probably you know that he has been to England for practical training.

Malkani has been working very hard. He is filling Thakkar Bapa's place well enough. The entire staff works sincerely and

[1] Kedarnath Kulkarni, Kishorelal Mashruwala's guru

leaves nothing to be desired. So far the work has been progressing very well.

. . .[1] is now showing his teeth. He has . . .[2] under his complete control. He doesn't intend now to give the sisters their share. He got the power of attorney given by . . .[3] to all three revoked and got a new power of attorney executed exclusively in his name. When I wrote to him protesting against all this, he gave me an evasive reply. I have now written to Nanalal. But I don't think it will have any effect.

Anandi, Bablo, Babu, Mohan, Vanamala, Bachu and Amina's children are making good progress. Ramnarayan Pathak[4] gives three hours every week. Jamnadas [Gandhi] remains what he has been, thin and weak. He seems to be uneasy too. I think I wrote to you about the death of Santok's mother. Prabhudas will settle down to khadi work in some village near his father-in-law's place. If he continues to be in Almora, the expenses would go up very much.

Having thus remembered the family budget today, I end this letter here. I am writing to Mani, but I hope her plight is not similar to Mahadev's. Let me know if you have any information about it.

To you both or rather to all,

Blessings from
BAPU

[From Gujarati]
Bapuna Patro–2: Sardar Vallabhbhaine, pp. 57-9

443. LETTER TO MANIBEHN PATEL

CUDDAPAH,[5]
4 a.m., Before Prayers, January 2, 1934

CHI. MANI,

I do not know whether I shall be able to hear directly from you now. I do get news of you from Father, but that is not enough to satisfy me. I, therefore, write to Dahyabhai for more. Write to me if you can. Keep your body and mind fit. I am doing well enough. I write a long letter to Ba every week as a regular thing. Nothing more today.

[1], [2] & [3] The names are omitted in the source.
[4] A Gujarati writer, then professor at the Gujarat Vidyapith, 1920-28
[5] The source has "Kadkha".

Address your letters to Wardha.

Blessings from
BAPU

SMT. MANIBEHN PATEL, PRISONER
HINDALGA CENTRAL PRISON
BELGAUM

[From Gujarati]
Bapuna Patro–4: Manibehn Patelne, p. 116

444. LETTER TO AMTUSSALAAM

January 2, 1934

MY DEAR DAUGHTER,

I must write in English as I must write during the few moments I have to spare. You may not blame me if letters I write do not reach you. But you have lost nothing if any letter has not reached you. I am moving about so rapidly that there need be no surprise if some of my letters go astray without anybody's fault. But my not writing does not mean that I do not constantly think of all of you. I do. But I write sparingly for want of time and in order to enable others to have a chance of writing. My letter to any one of you should be regarded as letters to all.

By the time you are discharged I shall be travelling in the extreme south of India. If you think that it is worth while coming all the way merely to see me, you shall come. I would strongly advise you to restrain yourself and do all the talking through correspondence.

Of course you should see your mother and also Narandas. They are both within easy reach. But the final decision rests with you. My advice to all the others is just what I am giving to you.

I am glad you have kept so well.

I have heard about Velanbehn and Durgabehn, also Lilavati. They must all write to me when they are discharged. I hope you have all made the best use of your time.

My health is excellent. The last weight was 108 lb. My food is milk and oranges and one green vegetable plain boiled without salt. I take other fruit when it easily comes my way. This is either fresh grapes or pomegranate. Generally speaking I take no dates at present. I do not seem to need them. My work commences at 3 a.m. and ends generally at 9 p.m. Of course I try to get some sleep in the middle of the day.

Your Hindi writing as also your Gujarati is not bad. I hope the Ramadan fast has not weakened you. Has Amina been taking it? Tell her I often receive news about her children who are getting on nicely. I have just got a report from their Urdu teacher.

Love to you all.

BAPU

[PS.]

Om and Kisan are with me, keeping well.

From a photostat: G.N. 289

445. LETTER TO SATIS CHANDRA DAS GUPTA

January 2, 1934

DEAR SATIS BABU,

Your letter of 30th ultimo has given me much relief. The money you have received was meant to ease some pressure. It was the utmost that could be given to you. I hope your workers will succeed. It is most exacting and exasperating work. They must be prepared to take insults as cheerfully as they would take cheques and bank-notes.

I like the idea of Dr. Roy personally fixing the tour programme. I see in the papers received today that he had a serious accident. I hope it is not so serious as reported. I have wired but you will give me full details.

I am glad you have regained your weight. But 128 is not enough for your build. There is no reason why you should not have your fine muscles which you used to have before. Regarding the body as God's instrument, you are bound to keep it as fit as it is possible to keep it consistently with the obvious and necessary limits.

I hope Arun[1] is doing well. He has to attend on me when I tour in Bengal. But he won't be allowed if he is in a weak state of health.

Love.

BAPU

[PS.]

What about Bengali *Harijan*?[2]

From a photostat: G.N. 1626

[1] Addressee's son

[2] Since Bengali *Harijan* could not support itself, Gandhiji had advised the addressee to discontinue its publication.

446. LETTER TO DUDHABHAI M. DAFDA

January 2, 1934

BHAI DUDHABHAI,

I got your letter. By God's grace everything will turn out well. I came to know only yesterday that Lakshmi[1] is expecting. I have advised that if Manjukeshabehn offers to shoulder the responsibility, Lakshmi may go to Bardoli for her delivery, otherwise she should get herself admitted in the Vadilal Hospital at Ahmedabad. It has all the facilities, and some Ashram women also are working in it and they will be able to look after her. Let me know if you have any suggestion to make in this regard. I will decide finally after I hear from Maruti[2] and Lakshmi. I have made the necessary arrangements for you to get a copy of the *Harijanbandhu*. Let me know if you do not get it. What help did Sunderjibhai give? Let me have his address. I have forgotten it completely. A girls' hostel is being run in the Sabarmati Harijan Ashram. Are you willing to send the girls there? If yes, I may inquire. They may admit them there. My blessings to all the children.

Blessings from
BAPU

SJT. DUDHABHAI MALJI
HARIJAN TEACHER
SATHRA
BHAVNAGAR STATE
KATHIAWAR

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 3251

[1] Addressee's daughter who was brought up in the Sabarmati Ashram
[2] Lakshmi's husband

447. LETTER TO HEMPRABHA DAS GUPTA

January 2, 1934

CHI. HEMPRABHA,

I have your letter. Khadi too is in the hands of Rama. Khadi will flourish if it has Rama in it and that is possible only when we have Rama in us. Let us therefore make all efforts for khadi but let us not worry about it. Rama will do the worrying. The right to worry is His only, our dharma is but to serve. The less you worry, the greater will be the success. But I want to see you cheerful in spite of failures.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 1706

448. INTERVIEW TO HARIJAN WORKERS,

CUDDAPAH,
January 2, 1934[1]

GANDHIJI: The Harijan movement goes to the root of the evil. If untouchability goes, the castes as we know them today go.[2]

HARIJAN WORKERS: Surely not.

G. I talk of the extreme form of untouchability. But the evil is so widespread that in some form or other it runs through the whole Hindu social system and corrupts it. The distinction of high and low is at the bottom of untouchability. If the extreme form goes, the rest is bound to go. If it does not, our movement will be a mere camouflage. So long as the idea of high and low is not abolished, untouchability cannot be said to have been abolished.

H. W. What, then, of the varna which you seek to defend?

G. I do. But you must know my definition of it. It is as different from the present caste system as chalk is from cheese.

[1] Extracted from Chandrashankar Shukla's "Weekly Letter"

[2] A Harijan worker had asked whether Gandhiji wanted the caste system to remain.

Varna as I understand it is an economic law which operates, whether we know it or not. Conformation to it will bring happiness to mankind. Disregard for it is disrupting society today all over the world. Varna is the antithesis of the doctrine of 'might is right'. It abolishes all distinctions between high and low.

H. W. But nobody gives the meaning you give to varna.

G. That may be. Evolution of human thought is evolution of the meaning of words. I have no difficulty in seeing my meaning in the original *mantra* from which the theory of varna is derived,[1] nor in the *Gita* verses referring to varna.[2] Regulations about dining and marriage have no direct connection with varna. The distinguishing feature of varna is occupation.

H. W. Then you will restrict everyone to his father's occupation?

G. Neither I nor anybody else can impose the restriction on anyone. Varnadharma is not a man-made law to be imposed or relaxed at his will. It is natural to man in his regenerate state. He may disregard it to his cost. Everyone is free to follow or disobey it. It was discovered in India and followed more or less faithfully and knowingly for centuries. It is being followed ignorantly and helplessly even now by the bulk of the people. In the eye of that law, Brahmin and Bhangi are absolutely on an equal footing. A Bhangi who does his work willingly and faithfully will find favour with God. A Brahmin who, no matter how learned he may be, does not follow his calling will incur divine displeasure. The law does not confer privileges, it defines duties. Truest democracy can be evolved only by a due recognition of and obedience to the law. Thus, in my opinion, there is no evil in varna. The evil consists in considering one varna as higher than another.

H. W. Surely, the varna that you describe exists only in your imagination! What we see around us is the solid fact of hundreds of castes, each claiming to be higher than some other.

G. That is unfortunately so. I am simply answering your question and showing you the vital difference between caste and varna. Castes are a human manufacture, are daily weakening and have to go. Varna as defined by me may be said to exist in my imagination. Its definition is not imaginary. It is inherent in the *mantra* on which it is based and is given in so many words in the *Bhagavad Gita*.

Harijan, 12-1-1934

[1] Rigveda, x, *Purushasukta*

[2] *Vide*, for instance, *Bhagavad Gita*, IV. 13.

449. SPEECH AT PUBLIC MEETING, CUDDAPAH

January 2, 1934

Replying to the addresses[1] and acknowledging the purse and other presents, Gandhiji said that the Cuddapah Municipality built beautiful houses for the Harijans under their employ. The quarters were kept clean and tidy. He was very glad to find a co-operative society and a temple in their midst, and adequate water facilities.[2]

This place is well worth a visit. I congratulate the Municipality on having provided to the most useful servants of the town quarters the like of which I have not so far seen anywhere during the tour. I wish other municipalities would follow your example.

Gandhiji then appealed to the audience to co-operate with him wholeheartedly in ameliorating the conditions of Harijans.

The Hindu, 4-1-1934, and *Harijan*, 12-1-1934

450. LETTER TO JAMNALAL BAJAJ

December 31, 1933/[January 3, 1934][3]

CHI. JAMNALAL,

I got your letter written from Calcutta. I could not judge from the letter whether or not you had met Satis Babu during your stay there. I suppose you did meet him. You haven't mentioned anything about your health, either. Write about it in your next letter. The fact that Shivprasad escaped unhurt is indeed a remarkable thing. The tour is progressing very well. My body is standing the strain better than I had expected. There is, therefore, no cause at all for worry. Om is doing well enough. She is not a girl who will let others worry for her. She is slowly getting trained for the position of secretary. She is not vigilant enough to satisfy me, but I don't wish to goad her to be more sharp at the cost of her health. I ask her to do only

[1] Presented by the Municipality, the Depressed Classes Association and the District Board

[2] The following paragraph is from the *Harijan*.

[3] The postscript was written on Wednesday, which fell on January 3, 1934.

as much work as she can do without strain. I am sure you know that Kisan is accompanying me. She is a very good girl. She has become very friendly with Om. Her health went down in jail. Before that she was fairly strong and was quite smart. The tour seems to have benefited her. At present Malkani is with me. I needn't say anything about him. He is working hard. Damodar is working satisfactorily. He has proved his sincerity and capacity. Did you send the sum which was to be sent to Delhi from the Harijan account? Gosibehn will have to be paid something every month. Pay that also from some account. Pay her what Mathuradas suggests. She should have been given the full amount from Bombay, but the people there are not giving it. I will write now, but while the correspondence is going on she must get the amount from somewhere.

Blessings from
BAPU

PS.

Before Morning Prayer, Wednesday

How is it that Janakibehn complains against your temper? If there is any truth in her complaint, overcome your weakness. I asked Om and she also tells me that sometimes you make even Madan Mohan weep.

Tara has always been a sincere worker. If she keeps good health she will fully prove her worth. I had a wire from Dr. Sharma (of Delhi). He has sold his property for Rs. 10,000 and paid off his debt. Now he wishes to come and live in the Ashram. He will come with his wife. I have advised him to write to you. I think he should be taken in. If he proves worthy, well and good. Otherwise he will be asked to leave the Ashram.

I hope you work with due regard to your health. Janakibai Soman[1] wishes to stay there. Could she be accommodated where Vidya and the others were?

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 2928

[1] Ramachandra J. Soman's mother

451. SPEECH AT PEDDAVADUGURU

January 3, 1934

Mahatmaji thanked the people for the address and the purse and said that he would not have any objection for earmarking the sum[1] for the Kesava Vidyanilayam—a residential school for Harijans in memory of the late lamented P. Kesava Pillai—provided a workable scheme and workers were forthcoming. The moneys that were collected would of course be spent for imparting education to Harijans and providing other facilities for their uplift. Neither grants of money nor mere removal of physical untouchability were sufficient to complete the process of purification which the *savarnas* ought to undergo to atone for their past sins and neglect. What was necessary was to banish the very idea of distinction between high and low, touchable and untouchable from their thought. This was easy if people could control their mind. But generally the reverse was true and hence the difficulty. Hinduism would suffer extinction if untouchability continued to exist. He prayed the Almighty to give them the will and courage to serve the Harijan cause and remove the evil.

The Hindu, 4-1-1934

452. EXTRACTS FROM SPEECHES TO WOMEN[2]

[Before *January 4, 1934*][3]

The real ornament of woman is her character, her purity. Metal and stones can never be real ornaments. The names of women like Sita and Damayanti have become sacred to us for their unsullied virtue, never for their jewellery, if they wore any. My asking from you your jewellery has also a wider significance. Several sisters have told me that they feel all the better for getting rid of their jewels.[4]

I have called this an act of merit in more ways than one. No man or woman is entitled to the possession of wealth, unless he or she has given a fair share of it to the poor and the helpless.

[1] Of Rs. 1,116

[2] Reproduced from Chandrashankar Shukla's "Weekly Letter"

[3] The source does not mention the dates or the places of the meetings, which were held in Andhra. Gandhiji left Andhra on January 4.

[4] What follows was spoken at another meeting.

It is a social and religious obligation and has been called a sacrifice by the *Bhagavad Gita*. He who does not offer this sacrifice has been called a thief.[1] The *Gita* has enumerated many forms of sacrifice; but what greater sacrifice can there be than to serve the poor and the needy? For us today there can be no sacrifice higher than to forget the distinctions of high and low and to realize the equality of all men. I also wish to bring home to the women of India that real ornamentation lies, not in loading the body with metal and stones, but in purifying the heart and developing the beauty of the soul.

On one occasion he recalled to them the sacrifice of the late Shrimati Annapurna Devi,[2] who was the first in Andhra to set to her sisters a noble example of sacrifice and service, and said:

The very first day she met me she took off her ornaments—not one, but all. The women who witnessed the scene were amazed at what was happening. And then there was a shower of ornaments. And do you think she looked less handsome because of her having given away the ornaments? Rather she looked to me more handsome. The English language has the proverb, 'Handsome is that handsome does.'

Harijan, 12-1-1934

453. LETTER TO F. MARY BARR

TUMKUR,
January 4, 1934

CHI. MARY,

No letter from you for a long time. Duncan got on very well. He was with us all the way and I saw him just for a second even in Adyar, for I happened to visit Adyar at the instance of Mrs. Wood. Do tell me how you are getting on. I hope Chandra is flourishing, and causes you no bother. I am sending this to your village address though you should now be in Wardha. I hope your eyes are behaving better.

Love,

BAPU

SHRIMATI MARY BARR
C/O SHETH DEEPCHANDJI
BETUL, C.P.

From a photostat: G.N. 6017

[1] III. 12
[2] *Vide* Vol. XXXV, pp. 197-8.

454. SPEECH AT DODDABALLAPUR

January 4, 1934

Gandhiji thanked the citizens for the purse and hoped that every one of them, if they had not already done so, would get rid of untouchability from their hearts. He read in their address that there were 800 Harijans living in Doddaballapur and that fifty per cent of the Harijan children were attending schools. They were entitled to congratulations on this account. But they could not possibly give themselves satisfaction by showing that so many Harijan children attended Harijan schools. It was absolutely necessary for them to teach Harijan boys and girls and for this it was necessary for them to root out untouchability from their heart. It was wrong to consider a single person as untouchable. They should all forget that any single human being was lower than themselves. In conclusion, Gandhiji hoped that God would give them all strength to blot out the curse of untouchability.

The Hindu, 4-1-1934

455. DISCUSSION WITH WORKERS[1]

TUMKUR,
January 4, 1934

Questions were put to Gandhiji about temple-entry by Harijans. Gandhiji said that the opposition to temple-entry was on the wane and that he found practically no opposition throughout his present tour to this work.

Asked what they should do if the majority were in favour of temple-entry and the State remained neutral, Gandhiji said:

Let the majority and the minority fight it out. The State will not interfere. Only when the majority and the minority come to a clash, will the Government interfere and that too to maintain peace and tranquillity. The majority cannot be obstructed by the minority.

To another question, Mahatma Gandhi replied that there was no such thing as utter majority.

The Hindu, 5-1-1934

[1] These included K. Ranga Iengar, T. Subramanyam and Narayana Setty.

456. SPEECH AT PUBLIC MEETING, TUMKUR

January 4, 1934

It gives me great pleasure to renew my acquaintance with you. I am not new to you, nor are you new to me. But the mission that brings me here today is different from the mission that had brought me here years ago.[1] Your address itself has made clear what I expect of you. I thank you for the purse that has been presented to me on behalf of the Harijans this afternoon. In your address you have recounted many of the virtues to which I might even be a stranger. You have showered upon me compliments that may be wholly undeserved. You have been good enough to admit that you are getting more and more convinced that the eradication of untouchability from our society will not only purify Hinduism, but will transmute our national weakness into national strength and bring about greater solidarity among our people professing different religious faiths. After that admission I had expected a recounting on your part of the many things that you might have done on behalf of the Harijans. You express regret that, barring a few individual efforts, you have done little yet for the removal of untouchability. Happily the best of our ability requires the purification of our own hearts. If we really mean that on God's earth there is no one low and no one high, we shall accomplish the mission that has brought me here today. This belief in the distinction between the high and the low has eaten into the very vitals of Hinduism and what I have stated from a thousand platforms is but this simple truth that, if we do not now get rid of this canker, there is the impending danger of Hinduism itself perishing. I therefore hope and pray that every one of those who are here present at this meeting will realize the truth of what I have said and will make the best possible effort to get rid of this curse of untouchability.

Proceeding, Mahatmaji expressed his regret at not being able to visit all parts of the town as he would have wished. Owing to physical weakness, it was not possible for him to visit public institutions doing useful work. He hoped that the people of Tumkur would take the will for the deed.

The Hindu, 5-1-1934

[1] Gandhiji had visited Mysore State in connection with Deshbandhu Memorial Fund collections and stayed at Nandi Hills from April 19 to the end of August 1927 to recoup his health; *vide* Vols. XXXIII and XXXIV.

457. *SPEECH AT WOMEN'S MEETING, BANGALORE*[1]

January 4, 1934

SISTERS,

It gives me much pleasure to see you again after a lapse of many years. You have in the opening portion of your address expressed anxiety about my health on account of the constant travels. Who wuuld show anxiety, if not you, the mothers of India, for your children? And I am one among the millions of your children. But you should know that the way you can relieve my anxiety is by doing according to the message that I have come to tell you. You can relieve my anxiety by paying handsomely for the mission that I am conducting. Sisters in other parts of India, having felt the same anxiety that you feel, have showered their jewellery, their bangles, their rings, and their necklaces on me. The silver and copper that you may give me is, truly speaking, according to our custom, not your property. That belongs to your parents or to your husbands. But what I want is something that you can definitely call your own and that can only be your jewellery. But the giving up of your jewellery is the least of all the things that I want you to do. It can only be a sign of your determination to carry out the message to its full extent. And that message is that you should consider the Harijans as your own blood-brothers and blood-sisters and as your own children. It is wrong and sinful to consider a single human being as an untouchable. God has created all men and women alike. Although our forms may be different and our dispositions may be different, we are still, at the bottom, one. Even as the leaves of one tree are one, whether they are small or big, so I want you to have no distinction of untouchable and touchable. And that is what I call purification of the heart.

The Hindu, 5-1-1934

[1] The meeting, at which 5,000 ladies were present, was held in the R. B. A. N. M. High School compound.

458. SPEECH AT PUBLIC MEETING, BANGALORE

January 4, 1934

FRIENDS,

I am deeply touched by your welcome. I do not want all this enthusiasm of yours and all this exhibition of affection towards me to waste away without turning them to good use. If you therefore have patience with me for a few brief moments, you will see that I turn all that enthusiasm and affection to good account. What I am about to do will also be a test of the genuineness of your enthusiasm and your affection.

You know the message that I want to tell you. I would like us all, every one of us, to purify our heart of the curse of untouchability. In one of the many addresses that I had the honour and pleasure of receiving today after entering the border of Mysore State, it was truly stated that this curse of untouchability had permeated Hindu society to such an extent that it almost ruled our lives and the signatories to the address were good enough to say that the message I was trying to deliver to the Hindus of India was producing its effect and went on to admit that, if we could but get rid of this poison of untouchability, all our differences even betweeen different communities would vanish. There you see what I am asking every one of us to do. I am pleading with you that we should get rid of this poison of untouchability all along the line, so that we won't have only a particular class labelled as Harijans but we should all become Harijans, namely, and truly, children of God.

Today if we appeared before our Maker with this uncleanliness in our hearts, He will disown us because we have ourselves become disinherited. And this little purse that you have given me, I regard as earnest of your determination that you will henceforth cease to regard any being on earth as lower than yourselves. If among earthly parents there is no grade among their children, do you think that God has grades among His children, the God Whom we consider as the One and only Being, if He may be called a being, Who holds the scales of justice absolutely even? If you have actually understood the spirit of my message, you will understand when I say to you that those who give to the

Harijan cause gain. I go further and contend that you can never give too much to this cause.

The Hindu, 5-1-1934

459. PLEA FOR CATHOLICITY[1]

During my frequent travels I have noticed that the reception committees are not too mindful of expense in catering for the wants of guests. They will insist on producing sweets or other delicacies and a multiplicity of dishes. I have firmly discountenanced these at all times, but this time when I am making collections for the Harijan cause, which I regard as a mission of penance and purification, I feel pained when there is any attempt at lavish hospitality. In two places I observed that Gujarati cooks were brought in to produce Gujarati dishes. I regard this as a wholly unnecessary procedure. I believe that we should be able to accommodate ourselves to the food eaten in the provinces other than our own. I know that this is not so simple a question as it appears. I know southerners who have made a Herculean effort to take to Gujarati food and failed. Gujaratis will not take to the southern mode of cooking. Bengal produces dainties which the other provinces will not easily relish. If we would be national instead of provincial, we would have to have an interchange of habits as to food, simplify our tastes and produce healthy dishes that all can take with impunity. This means a careful study of the foods taken by different provinces, castes and denominations. Unfortunately, or fortunately, there are not only different combinations in different provinces, but there are different styles in the same province, among the different communities. It is necessary, therefore, for national workers to study the foods and the methods of preparing them in the various provinces and discover common, simple and cheap dishes which all can take without upsetting the digestive apparatus. In any case, it must be a matter of shame for workers not to know the manners and customs of different provinces and communities. In liberal households cooks ought to be able to cook foods eaten in the various provinces. Why should not a Gujarati be able to produce dishes which a Tamilian or an Andhra or a Bengali ordinarily eats? I know that we cannot meet at the top. Nor is such a meeting necessary or desirable. Rich people will have not only

[1] A Gujarati version of this appeared in *Harijanbandhu*, 31-12-1933.

provincial combinations but specialities designed for their own households. These cannot be universalized. What can be and should be aimed at are common dishes for common people. This I know is easily possible if we have the mind. But to make this possible, volunteers will have to learn the art of cooking and for this purpose they will have also to study the values of different foods and evolve common dishes easily and cheaply prepared.

I have strayed somewhat from my main purpose, which is to ask organizers of the tour in the provinces not to pamper us but to be rigorously simple and economical in catering for us. We are, or profess to be, conducting a mission of self-purification and representing the cause of the outcastes of Hindu humanity. As such we have no right to the satisfaction of any but the barest wants and creature comforts. Fried things and sweets must be strictly eschewed. Ghee ought to be most sparingly used. More than one green vegetable simply boiled would be regarded as unnecessary. Expensive fruit should be always avoided. I know that I am the culprit in the matter of fruit. Friends would pamper me and go out of the way to procure the richest fruit for me. I can only assure them that I do not need any other fruit than oranges, which experience has proved to be necessary for me. In spite of all my vaunted abstinence, I know that of my party I am the costliest member to feed. I am sorry that it should be so, but mother goat to whose milk I owe my bodily strength and sister orange who keeps me fresh cannot compete in cheapness with rice and wheat. Let not my numerous hosts, however, add to my indebtedness by importing tempting superfluities. Let them not pander to my weaknesses, if they will help me to do my duty towards Harijans.

Harijan, 5-1-1934

460. *LETTER TO MAHALAKSHMI M. THAKKAR*

January 5, 1934

CHI. MAHALAKSHMI,

Did you get the letter that I wrote to you in jail? I still do not know what happened to Madhavji finally. You should not worry at all about the children. Please have faith that what Madhavji has done after careful thinking and after consulting me is right. Nevertheless, do what you wish. I want complete freedom of thought and action for women. Write to me every-

thing. Let me know also how you spent the time and what you read in jail. Read the back numbers of *Harijanbandhu*.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 6825

461. LETTER TO PRABHAVATI

January 5, 1934

CHI. PRABHAVATI,

I got your two letters on successive days.

I have arranged with Ghanshyamdas about Rajeshwar. Send me his address. Since when has he not been receiving the money?

To which question about Jayaprakash and you have I not replied? My impression is that I have replied to all questions arising from your letter. It is possible, though, that you did not get that letter. If that is so, please ask me again.

Since you have started on the medicine, try it out. I also don't have much faith in it. I very much wish that Jayaprakash and you should be all right. I do not think that you are at all ill. But if the doctor says you are, what is one to do?

I have not been weighed recently. But I keep good health. I also eat well.

Brijkrishna may be said to have recovered completely. He walks about a little now. Devdas was released unexpectedly.[1] I don't know anything more.

Ba writes regularly. Kisan will continue to accompany me for the present. She is well. She also helps a little in the work. Vidya did not keep good health and the girl with her turned out to be a thief. She has, therefore, left and gone to her father.

I understand about Rajendrababu. Tell him that I have written to him.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 3439

[1] On January 2, 1934

462. LETTER TO V. L. PHADKE[1]

January 5, 1934

BHAI MAMA,

I have your letter. I have suggested not that the management of the institutions should be handed over to the Harijan Sevak Sangh but that the Harijan Sevak Sangh should provide their expenses. From now on, therefore, it will be necessary to satisfy the Sangh. When somebody provides us funds it is only fair that we satisfy them about the way we spend the funds and the way we run the institutions.

Sardar did not mean by the words used in his letter 'the other world'. He meant 'in jail' or 'outside jail'. Is not that, too, 'the other world'? We can call it 'the other world' on the earth. But you need not get alarmed or start worrying because of that. For the present, you are expected to devote yourself exclusively to your [work][2]. Those who wish to go to 'the other world' on the earth will certainly get their turn. It is a matter of a few days only. You must be getting the news about me from *Harijanbandhu*.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 3827

463. LETTER TO JIVANJI D. DESAI

MYSORE,
January 5, 1934

BHAI JIVANJI,

I have gone through the report of the discussion with me about cow-protection. It is accurate. You may, therefore, use it if you wish.

Has the Municipality taken over control of the Vidyapith library or did we ourselves rearrange the books? Has the con-

[1] Secretary of Antyaja Seva Mandal and founder of the Harijan Ashram at Godhra

[2] The source is illegible here.

struction of the library building started? If not, ask Balubhai when it will begin and let me know.

Have any machines been left in the press or have they all been confiscated.

Has anything been done about the books to be published?

Blessings from
BAPU

[PS.]

The report[1] of the discussion is enclosed.

I hope Kaka got the letter which I wrote to him. In it I have written something for you to convey to Mahadev.

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 9933. Also C.W. 6908. Courtesy: Jivanji D. Desai

464. LETTER TO BRIJKRISHNA CHANDIWALA

MYSORE,
January 5, 1934

CHI. BRIJKISAN,

I wrote you two letters. Your letter does not acknowledge either. There is no village by the name of Srinagar in Andhradesha, so your letter must have been sent to Kashmir. The address I sent you was Sitanagaram. God has been very merciful in making you rise from your death-bed. Now you must be very careful and make your body sturdier than before. You must follow Dr. Ansari's instructions to the letter. Why did Ram Babu leave off? For how many months have you rented the new house? What is the rent? I am taking the touring well.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 2406

[1] This is not available.

465. SPEECH AT HARIJANS' MEETING

MYSORE,
January 5, 1934

You should conform to the rules of hygiene and sanitation—internal as well as external. Internal sanitation consists in taking the name of God—the first thing to be done after getting up in the morning. That is the breakfast for the soul.

When he was told that the Harijans of the locality had given up beef-eating, he added:

It is a matter of deep joy to me and congratulation for you that you have given up beef-eating. I would like you to be able to say the same thing about drink. What is the use of paying for some coloured water which makes us so mad that we forget the distinction between mother, wife and sister? I have heard Harijans telling me that drink is prescribed for them on occasions of marriage and death. I can tell you, without fear of contradiction, that that is a suggestion of the devil. It is nowhere written in scriptures. I would ask you, brothers and sisters, not to go near the devil. I hope you will take my advice to heart and it will give me great joy when you will be able to say that you have given up drink also.

Harijan, 12-1-1934

466. SPEECH AT PUBLIC MEETING, MYSORE

January 5, 1934

It has given me much pleasure to renew acquaintance after six long years. As you are aware, I came to Mysore State in order to regain my health that I had lost during the tour which I was conducting at that time. And naturally I have the most pleasant recollections of my stay in Mysore. From His Highness the Maharaja Saheb and his Dewan and other officials to the subjects of H.H. the Maharaja Saheb, I experienced nothing but the warmest affection. You can, therefore, understand more fully probably than before how much joy it must have given me to have come in your midst again. You have added to the joy

and pleasure by asking me to perform the ceremony of unveiling a portrait of the late Sjt. Venkatakrishnayya, the Grand Old Man of Mysore. I congratulate the artist upon his effort, because it is a faithful representation of the figure which was quite familiar to me. Perhaps, all of you do not know that I had the pleasure and privilege of seeing the Grand Old Man of Mysore in flesh and blood during my last visit. I had then become acquainted with his many virtues. I knew then that he occupied a unique place in your hearts. I am quite sure you do not expect me or want me to recount his many virtues. You who were on the spot knew them much better than I could possibly do during a brief visit. I only hope that those of his virtues for which you and I prize his memory will be translated into our lives. We may not flatter ourselves with the belief that we have discharged the obligation to his memory by your inviting me to unveil this portrait and witnessing the ceremony and by my unveiling it.

I must now pass on to the mission that has brought me here. The Municipal address reminds me that I should see things which are worth seeing, so that I may carry away happy impressions of the effort that has been and is being made here on behalf of the Harijans. The Reception Committee with very great forethought had arranged to take me, before bringing me to this meeting, to various *cheries*[1] and showed me the improvements made during these six years. And you are quite right in thinking that after an examination of these places I should carry away nothing but happy impressions of what has been done on behalf of Harijans. I must congratulate the State and the Municipality of Mysore on the neatness and cleanliness I observed in all the places visited this afternoon. And I am glad for the assurance that the Municipality will not lose any time in looking after the domestic comforts of the Harijans of this city. In my opinion, sweepers in every city are its noblest servants. It must be a matter of humiliation and shame to have the sweepers and scavengers consigned to the dirtiest places and utterly neglected. In my opinion, they hold the key of the health of every city in their pockets. Any city that dares neglect its scavengers and sweepers commits the crime of neglecting the health of its citizens.

But my mission covers a much wider theme than the economic welfare of Harijans. We are, no doubt, bound to jealously guard their economic and educational welfare. But this is not enough, if we are to do reparation to Harijans for the untold

[1] Localities

hardships to which we have subjected them for centuries past. They are entitled to precisely the same rights and privileges as any other citizen. And as Hindus they are entitled to the same social amenities and religious privileges that any other Hindu is entitled to. My mission, therefore, is to invite *savarna* Hindus to wash themselves clean of the guilt of untouchability. And if, during the short period of grace open to *savarna* Hindus, they fail to do this duty, I have not the shadow of a doubt that Hinduism will perish. You can now understand that this cannot be done by a municipality or even the Maharaja Saheb himself. If you and I will not change our hearts, what can even Rajas and Maharajas do? It is, therefore, my privilege, as it is my duty, to invite you to cleanse your hearts of untouchability, the distinction of high and low. If you understand thoroughly the spirit of this message, the change of heart is an incredibly simple performance; and you can see in the twinkling of an eye how, if this change comes about in *savarna* Hindu hearts, the economic, social and religious progress of Harijans must follow. It will then be a sign and seal of this change of heart. All these purses you have been kind enough to give me I consider as an earnest of your determination to make that change of heart. May God give you the strength to do it and save Hinduism from impending doom.

Harijan, 12-1-1934

467. EXTRACTS FROM SPEECHES[1]

[Before *January 6, 1934*]

You should know that our duty to Harijans does not end with giving them good houses or giving them separate wells, schools and so on. If we gave them all these and still kept them untouchables, it would only mean replacing iron chains by golden ones; but the slave would still be a slave. Harijans must have all the amenities that we enjoy. But I go further and say, you must absorb them, you must bridge the gulf that lies today between them and you. The purification we are striving for is not complete till we have purged our hearts of this distinction. You and I may not be satisfied with anything less.[2]

You, mothers, should wash your children every day, and so should you wash yourselves. In the morning you should

[1] Reproduced from Chandrashankar Shukla's "Weekly Letter", which bears the date-line "Bangalore, 6-1-1934"

[2] What follows was addressed to Harijan women at another meeting.

have what I call internal wash, that is to say, the first thing you should do on getting up is to take Ramanama and then pray to God that you should pass the day in sacredness, so that no wrong word may pass your lips and no wrong act may be done by you. And then you should give yourselves an external wash.

At Anantapur[1], opening a water-tap for them, he said:

May this water be the water of life to you. Water is an emblem of purity. Just as we purify the body by bathing with water, so can we become pure in heart by a morning wash, i.e., by taking the name of God.

I am trying every moment of my life to be guided by ahimsa, by love. I am essentially a lover of peace. I do not want to create dissensions. And I assure those who oppose me that I shall not do a single thing which I know may be contrary to truth and love.[2]

But we have created a hope in the hearts of Harijans. They have begun to feel that they are going to be freed from this serfdom. I expect of you that you will fulfil it. It is said in all religions of the world that, if the poor are deceived, if the hopes given to them are not fulfilled, they heave a sigh of despair, a curse. And I have no doubt that, if, after all that we have said and promised, we play false, the curse of these poor people is bound to descend on us and we shall perish.

Harijan, 12-1-1934

468. LETTER TO PARIKSHITLAL L. MAJMUDAR

January 6, 1934

BHAI PARIKSHITLAL,

At the moment I cannot think of anything that I can do from here about the laws regarding Bhundi Bhunchhi[3]. You have done the right thing in writing to the Dewan. Please let me know if there has been any reply from him. If I get an authoritative report on the subject from a newspaper correspondent in Kutch, I would publish it in *Harijan*. Is the report that you have received authentic? Please inquire and let me know. Try and get a copy of the legislation. Most probably it was

[1] On January 3.

[2] This was said at a meeting held in Nellore on December 30. What follows was said at another meeting.

[3] A tax imposed by the Kutch State on members of the Meghaval caste who were parties to a widow-marriage; *vide* Vol. XXXV, pp. 277-8.

published in *Navajivan*. The cheque which Chhaganlal Joshi has sent to you is an instalment of that sum of Rs. 5,700. I had made arrangements for it before I got your letter regarding the use of a disinfectant. Hence the cheque. I will discuss the matter further when I meet Thakkar Bapa on the 16th.

Blessings from
BAPU

SJT. PARIKSHITLAL MAJMUDAR
HARIJAN ASHRAM
SABARMATI
GUJARAT

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 3999

469. SPEECH AT STUDENTS' MEETING, BANGALORE

January 6, 1934

A servant of Harijans must be above suspicion like Caesar's wife. He must have a character above reproach. His eyes must be clean so that they may not offend. His hands also must be clean and his touch must be pure and gentle. His heart will not harbour a single impure thought. His ears must be tuned to listen to the music of the spheres, his feet will take him to the purest work, never to dens of evil and he will give his ear to all he hears but will spare his voice.

In the end Gandhiji exhorted them to join one of the greatest of reform movements in modern times.

The Bombay Chronicle, 9-1-1934

470. SPEECH AT APEX BANK HALL, BANGALORE[1]

January 7, 1934

My connection with the co-operative movement is of a perfunctory character. I tried to understand it as interpreted by Sir Daniel Hamilton. I know what boon it can become to agriculturists. I wish to tell you what I said long ago at a co-operatives' meeting at Bombay, when I had the honour of being invited by Lord Willingdon. . . . It is necessary for co-operative societies

[1] An address was presented to Gandhiji at the Provincial Co-operative Apex Bank Hall.

to trace the course of every pice lent. Find out what the borrower is doing with his money. This thought has never left me.[1]

Gandhiji made a touching reference to the late Mr. K. H. Ramayya, Registrar of Co-operative Societies. He said that while he was in Bangalore six years ago, he used to meet the late Mr. Ramayya often and used to cut jokes with him. It was only yesterday that he had learnt of the passing away of Mr. Ramayya. Mahatma was really sorry for this. The great work that he had done for the cause of Co-operation in the State was too well-known to need repetition by him.

The Bombay Chronicle, 9-1-1934, and *The Hindu* 8-1-1934

471. SPEECH AT CIVIC RECEPTION, BANGALORE

January 7, 1934

I am deeply grateful to the Banglore City Municipality for presenting me with this address. You have reminded me in your address that you were good enough to do me the honour of giving me such an address when I was in your midst last time. And it flatters me to see that I still retain a corner of your hearts. I tender you my congratulations upon all the things that you have done and are doing on behalf of the Harijans whose cause has brought me here. I tender also my respectful congratulations to His Highness for the liberality with which his Government has been dealing with this problem. You have admitted in your address that, while so much is being done by the Municipality for the Harijans, much more yet remains to be done. It would be wrong on my part if I did not re-echo that sentiment expressed in your address. During the morning peregrinations, I had the painful duty of witnessing some of the habitations occupied by the Harijans. It is difficult to call them even huts. I had, therefore, not hesitated to describe them as 'holes'. These holes are no protection whatever to the Harijans against wind, rain and sun. These dwellings are built of debris, which the Harijans could lay their hands upon.

You have every right to pride yourselves upon the beauty of Bangalore. I am free to confess that Bombay cannot be described as 'Bombay, the beautiful'. There are such hideous and ugly spots in Bombay that it is a misnomer to call that city 'beautiful'. Comparatively speaking, therefore, I have no hesitation

[1] What follows is from *The Hindu*.

whatever in giving Bangalore the first prize for a beautiful city. But I would like you not to be satisfied with the comparative merit. I would like you to set before yourselves a minimum standard of comfort for the poorest of your citizens.

Proceeding, Mahatmaji thanked the citizens for the kind invitation extended to him to come over to Bangalore and stay for a short time after his all-India tour.

I have experienced so much kindness and so much attention that I assure you that I need no temptation whatever to bring me here if only the call of duty enables me to take advantage of your hospitality and your climate.

Mahatma Gandhi next said that the touching reference in the address to the absence of his wife had moved him deeply. They had taken the way that duty had shown them. Her duty had taken her away to Yeravda and his duty had brought him in their midst. He assured them that nothing would give them both greater pleasure than to enjoy their hospitality once more.

The Hindu, 8-1-1934

472. SPEECH AT TEMPERANCE ASSOCIATION, BANGALORE

January 7, 1934

It is a matter of pleasure to me that you have invited me to meet you and say a few words on the subject of temperance. Some of you perhaps know that this is one of the matters that I took up before I was known to anybody and before I had conceived the thought of entering the political arena. When as a young man I went to South Africa, I observed that the coolies, indentured Indians, were fast going down owing to the drink habit. The law in South Africa made it a crime for indentured Indians to carry drink home. They could drink as much as they liked at the canteen. The result was that many women were found literally lying in gutters. It was not a thing of which any Indian could be proud. I pleaded with the Government, but mine was a voice in the wilderness. So the thing went on. But it made a lasting impression on my mind. I knew what I had to do when I came to India after a long exile.

I am not a temperance man. I am a prohibition man. I fought with my countrymen in South Africa and said, "We should not fight for an equal right to drink." I could not persuade them

for a long time, but I did succeed in persuading a majority of them that to fight for rights was one thing and to fight for indulgence in vice was another. If the whites were not punished by the State for drinking, we could not plead for the same exemption. Here, in India, the Government are trading in liquor. I know from bitter experience of Harijans that they drink in spite of themselves. I have in mind an esteemed co-worker in Calcutta, namely, Satis Chandra Das Gupta. He gave up a remunerative job. He was and is still considered the right-hand man of Dr. Roy. He gave up his chemical work and today he lives near *bastis*. He administered pledges to Harijans not to drink. These they broke again and again. That broke his heart and he fasted for 15 days. It had a marvellous effect on the Harijans. They said they would not now go back on their pledges. Satis Babu had to go through that agony. It was a joy for him. A worker who fights drink tooth and nail has to go through this. Many Harijans have said to me, "Take away this temptation from us and we shall be all right. Do not put it in our way." When we are not able to control ourselves in so many things, how much less can the Harijans and the labourers control themselves? I have lived, eaten and drunk with them. They have no places of recreation. They live in wretched holes. They have no money to spend for creature comforts. What little they get, therefore, goes to canteens. I only give you the description to show you how keenly and bitterly I feel in connection with the drink evil. I have not the shadow of a doubt that we shall not be able to combat this evil successfully till prohibition comes. I have fixed views about prohibition. I have given you the result of my experience that, without prohibition, it is impossible to bring about sober habits among the labouring population in India. And I have observed that the Harijans are most addicted to this vice. India is a country in which total prohibition can succeed. People are not habitually given to drink. It is not a fashionable vice. The climate does not demand its use. But government revenue is touched by prohibition. Therefore they say, "Find other sources of income before you ask us for total prohibition." I say, "If you get revenue from impure sources and then say, 'Replace this revenue,' you cannot be heard. There should be no bargaining about it."

Harijan, 19-1-1934

473. SPEECH AT PUBLIC MEETING, BANGALORE[1]

January 7, 1934

It gives me very great pleasure to see Mr. V. P. Madhava Rao[2] present here. I had the pleasure of meeting him six years ago when I was in your midst. That, in spite of his advanced age, he should have come here to give me his blessings must move the hardest heart. I regard it as a blessing for the Harijan work I am doing and it is a matter of great joy and solace that such a great gathering of learned men of Mysore who have seen so much life should be here to bless this movement. But, I miss the presence, at this meeting, of Mr. Humza Hussain, who was the Chairman of the Reception Committee when I came here six years ago. I have a vivid recollection of his many kindnesses and how I wish he had been here at this meeting to greet me as an old friend. May God give his soul peace.

I am very grateful to you for the purse that you have presented me. I was almost going to say a "good purse", but I have hesitated to use this adjective, because I know that the citizens of Bangalore are quite able to put together a larger purse and I know that by the time I say good-bye to you, I shall have many generous contributions to the cause of Harijans. After all, it is the least reparation that we can do to these brothers and sisters whom Hindus have systematically suppressed.

I have read your address from top to bottom. And I congratulate you and the Maharaja Saheb's Government on the many things that you have been able to recite in that address. But, neither the State nor the people of Mysore nor I can find any cause for satisfaction unless untouchability is entirely rooted out from our hearts. While I gratefully acknowledge all that you have done for Harijans, I ask you not to rest content till all Harijans enjoy all the rights that *savarna* Hindus enjoy in all walks of life. Let us undergo this necessary purification, while there is this brief moment of probation still left to us by God. Be sure,

[1] Held at the National High School in the evening, the meeting was largely attended

[2] Retired Dewan of Mysore, Travancore and Baroda, chairman of the Mysore State Harijan Sevak Sangh

if you fail in this hour, God's wrath will swiftly descend on the Hindus.

But, one word to Harijan brothers and sisters. You cannot be free from this self-purification. You too have to make your sacrifices at the common altar. And that consists in the strict observance of sanitation, internal and external. Secondly, in giving up carrion and beef-eating wherever that habit still persists. In every part of the civilized world, carrion is abhorred with detestation. It is considered unfit for human consumption. And no one can call himself a Hindu and partake of beef. The sacredness of the cow and her worship is an integral part of Hinduism. Thirdly, I would ask every Harijan man and woman present here to give up the habit of drink. Let no Harijan say that *savarna* Hindus also drink. It is no answer. I would beseech you, as a fellow Harijan by calling, to shun all the vices of *savarna* Hindus. In spite of all the reparations that *savarna* Hindus make to you, in the presence of God after all, in the ultimate end, your salvation rests in your own hands. It was therefore a matter of great joy when day before yesterday[1] Harijans gave me their assurance that they had given up beef-eating and would try to give up drink. Let us all pray to God that He may give strength to the Harijans to carry out their resolve to leave off drink.

The Hindu, 8-1-1934

474. *TALK WITH HARIJAN WORKERS*[2]

BANGALORE,
January 7, 1934

It is for you to supplement the work done by the State.[3] You may find workers to go and live in the midst of Harijans. This is merely an illustration. The rule is, you begin where the State ends. The State cannot attend to individuals. That is the prerogative of private persons. Each worker should measure his own capacity. We must not do anything for spectacular effect. Our work may not be pretentious, but it must be solid. We have to come in intimate touch with the people—*savarnas* as well as Harijans. Such contact with the people can never be established

[1] *Vide* "Speech at Harijans' Meeting", p. 443

[2] Extracted from Chandrashankar Shukla's "Weekly Letter"

[3] Gandhiji had been asked, "When the State is doing so much, what are we to do?"

by the State. That is essentially the work of the social reformer. Temple-entry work is to be done by workers specially qualified for that work. If they show character, it will move the Harijan mass. The workers must not go in the midst of Harijans as strangers or patrons but go as friends and servants. Such work is being done in Wardha. If there is one true worker, he will multiply himself.

Harijan, 19-1-1934

475. NOTE TO N. R. MALKANI

January 8, 1934

MY DEAR MALKANI,

Here is some solid work for you. Prepare a statement about the two untouchability Bills, give the text of the two Bills, procure Government circulars and keep with the statement all the literature available.

BAPU

From a photostat : G.N. 904

476. LETTER TO PARVATIBEHN P. DESAI

BANGALORE,
January 8, 1934

CHI. PARVATI[1],

I have your letter. I had news of Pragji for the first time from you. Do you have any friends in Dharwar? Let me know whenever you get a letter from there. When was he taken to Dharwar? Keep me informed about yourself and the children. Address your letters to Wardha. Did you write the letter yourself or did you get it written by somebody else?

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 5036

[1] Wife of Pragji Desai

477. LETTER TO KASTURBA GANDHI

BANGALORE,
January 8, 1934

BA,

I have still not received your letter, but I believe it will reach me after some wandering. I hope you are getting the newspaper now. You must have received the *Bhagavat* and the *Ramayana*. Write for anything else you may wish to have. I had a letter from Manilal, as also one from Sushila. They are both well. Manilal is unperturbed and asks you not to worry about him. Sita is growing up fast. She is always playing about. Devdas has been released earlier than expected. He has gone to Ahmedabad. I had a wire from him. Perhaps he will visit you. There were letters from Ramdas and Nimu too. I keep on writing to Manu, but again there has been no letter from her. Kishorelal's fever has come down a little and so it can be hoped that he will have fully recovered in a few days. There is nothing but good news about Mani. Om, Kisan, Chandrashankar, etc., are all well. I am in Bangalore today. Everyone has been inquiring after you. Shankerlal and Gulzarilal have come here. There is to be a meeting of the *Panch* regarding the workers' wages. Tomorrow is Tuesday, and so it will meet tomorrow. Afterwards I have to go to Malabar. I will be going to the area which you once visited. Urmila Devi's[1] son has a job in Madras now. I keep good health. There is no cause at all for worry. At every place people come in large crowds and give me purses, jewellery, etc. Kanti is better now. I see that Bal will be seeing me in a few days. His health also is quite good. I hope all of you there are well. What progress have Shanta and Lalita made in their studies? And now the discourse.

Today I will write something about what the *Gita* says concerning *yajna*. The subject is introduced in Chapter III. In that chapter the Lord says that he who eats without performing *yajna* eats stolen food.[2] This is a very serious statement indeed, for eating stolen food is like swallowing raw mercury. Nobody can digest it

[1] Sister of C. R. Das
[2] III. 12

and, if anyone eats it, he will get eruptions all over the body. Hence Akho Bhagat has said: "Eating stolen food is like swallowing raw mercury." If, therefore, a person stops performing *yajna* even for a while, he becomes a thief. All of us should know what this *yajna* means. Fortunately for us, it is easy for all whose heart is in the right place. It requires no wealth, no intellect nor education. *Yajna* means any act of service. Only about a person whose whole life is a ceaseless *yajna* can it be said that he does not eat stolen food. Hence those who do just a little work as *yajna* may be said to be not guilty of theft to that extent. Looking at the matter from this point of view, we see that all of us are guilty of theft more or less. Our *yajna* can be said to be perfect only when we have shed all selfishness. To do this means to give up the sense of 'I' and 'mine', to cease feeling that this belongs to me and that to somebody else, that this is my son and that somebody else's. There should not be even a trace of such a feeling in one's heart. He alone can do this who offers up his all to Shri Krishna. He who has done that does everything with God as witness, as His servant and in a spirit of service. Such a person is always happy and peaceful in mind. Happiness and suffering are the same to him. He uses his body, mind, intellect, possessions—all that is his—for the service of others. All of us cannot do such perfect *yajna*. If, however, we have the aspiration in our heart to serve the whole world, what work is there which most people can do and which would include service to the whole world? Asking this question, we found that the answer was spinning, which is the work that countless people can do in the spirit of service. One who spins will have done that much labour for the service of the world. But I mention this only as an example. What I wished to explain was the meaning and importance of *yajna*. I shall be satisfied if I have been able to explain it.

Blessings to all sisters from
BAPU

[From Gujarati]
Bapuna Bane Patro, pp. 7-8

478. LETTER TO VALLABHBHAI PATEL

BANGALORE,
January 8, 1934

BHAI VALLABHBHAI,

After completing a letter to Ba, I am writing this to you. It is now past four in the afternoon. It is my weekly Silence Day. We are in Bangalore today. Tomorrow there is a meeting of the *Panch* to consider the demand of the [Ahmedabad] mills for a reduction in the workers' wages. Shankerlal [Banker], Gulzarilal and others have already arrived. The mill-owners will arrive tomorrow. I have told them that I would be able to give five hours for the meeting. We are leaving for Malabar tomorrow night.

The pressure of work remains heavy. But I keep good health. Subba Rao[1] came and examined me yesterday. He was pleased. The blood-pressure was 155-100. This is excellent. At the moment it is expected that Thakkar Bapa will meet me in Calicut on the 16th.

I am staying here in a State building[2], the same where I had put up before. The people's enthusiasm is great. The Dewan came and saw me. He talked a great deal about you. He has sent his salaams to you. He shows very great love.

I had a letter from . . .[3]. He wanted my permission to sell off his car. Soon after, I got a wire from Thakkar Bapa, informing me that he was really willing to sell it. I, therefore, gave my consent, although I didn't understand the position at all. In such matters I depend entirely on you. I, therefore, often follow the example of Ekalavya. He made a clay image of Dronacharya and learnt archery by practising before it so that he could become Arjuna's equal. I form a mental image of you and consult it. Assuming that you would advise me to give my consent in this matter, I sent a wire saying yes.

Napoleon[4] has been very much affected by the death of Kunvarji's wife. I see this from his loving reply to my letter of

[1] A noted physician of Bangalore

[2] Kumara Park

[3] The name is omitted in the source.

[4] Chhotubhai K. Mehta

condolence. I have written to him again. I see from . . .'s[1] letter that he is not happy. I have asked him what the reason is.

Munshi has resumed practice. You must have read about Jivraj.

Dr. Bidhan may be said to have returned from the jaws of death. He tells me so in reply to a wire which I had sent to him. A bone is fractured. He will have to be in bed for some 15 days at least.

I had a letter from Mama in which he has referred to a letter of yours. He says that it is not practicable now to collect separate contributions and keep separate accounts for the Harijan work, nor will the people give such contributions. Hence, for Navasari, Godhra and other centres for which separate funds and accounts were being maintained, budgets within our means have been passed and it has been decided to obtain the money from the funds of the Harijan Sevak Sangh. The control of the institutions concerned will not be changed. The only change will be that they will receive reasonable grants and will run under the supervision of the Harijan Sevak Sangh. Their independent existence will in no way be endangered. Mama has volunteered to devote himself wholly to this work for the present. I plainly refuse to guide anybody. I don't feel inclined in my heart to do so. If you have any questions to ask or wish to know more about the Harijan Sevak Sangh, you can write to me. I don't know what I should tell you. If, however, you give me the slightest indication as to what you want, I will give, that is, send all the required information. You need have no fear that I myself will write out the reply. I spare my hands and brain unnecessary exertion and economize time in doing my work.

Devdas has been released before his time. There was a wire from him. He will of course come and see me. The wire was sent from Ahmedabad. Most probably he will pay a visit to Ba.

Manilal and Sushila write to me. His affairs are all right. Keshu also has got a good job. Ramdas is very much upset. He can enjoy no peace of mind at all.

It seems that Kishorelal is steadily improving. Brijkrishna has survived. He can walk a little now. Jamnalal has a cold and so on. Shankerlal thinks that his health is certainly not too good. But his weight has increased and he has now reached about 200 lb.

[1] The name is omitted in the source.

Om and Kisan are quite well. And so is Mirabehn, of course.

Blessings to both from
BAPU

[From Gujarati]
Bapuna Patro-2: Sardar Vallabhbhaine, pp. 59-61

479. LETTER TO SHANTIKUMAR MORARJEE

January 8, 1934

CHI. SHANTIKUMAR,

I am often hoping for a letter from you and when I don't get any I take it that you have refrained from writing out of consideration for me.

I hope the operation[1] went off well. Please write or get someone to write to me sometimes. Normally, I am told, it is a simple operation.

I suppose you do read *Harijan*. God is protecting my health.

Blessings to you both from
BAPU

[PS.]

It is safer to write at the Wardha address.

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C.W. 4721. Courtesy: Shantikumar Morarjee

480. LETTER TO K. M. MUNSHI

January 8, 1934

BHAISHRI MUNSHI,

I have your letter. I have not received Lilavati's so far.

I will send you the required literature on the Bills regarding untouchability. If I cannot get a whole loaf of bread I shall be willing to accept even a quarter. It is only when I am offered instead of bread a stone purporting to be bread that I refuse to accept it. But I have no fear that you will ever give me a stone instead of bread. Please, therefore, continue to give me whatever you can.

[1] The addressee had been operated upon for hernia.

I see no harm if a party like the one you suggest comes into existence. Please go through the changes that I have made in your draft[1]. The reference to civil disobedience is not proper. An element of corruption had certainly crept into it. But even a reference to that is completely out of place in this draft. Our opponents are bound to take advantage of it. We might even take that risk if such reference were relevant. Nor was corruption the cause of my suspending that part of civil disobedience which I have done.

This party is not being formed in order to attract other parties to it. The reason for forming it is that those Congressmen who do not or cannot take part in the civil disobedience movement desire to ensure their continued [political] existence and to do some service. I, therefore, consider any reference to other parties as unnecessary. After the party is formed, it may start negotiations with other parties for any purpose. What its name will be will have to be thought over. Just as you thought it proper to consult me, I would advise you to consult Jawaharlal too. If you endanger your health by running about too much, you are going to hear from me.

Blessings to you both from
BAPU

From Gujarati: C.W. 7530. Courtesy: K. M. Munshi

481. MESSAGE TO THE PEOPLE OF MYSORE

January 9, 1934

I carry with me very pleasant recollections of my brief stay in the State. I hope the people of Mysore will keep up their reputation for being enlightened by removing untouchability root and branch.

The Hindu, 10-1-1934

[1] The addressee, along with Rangaswamy Ayyangar, had prepared a draft scheme to revive the Swaraj Party as the constitutional wing of the Congress and had submitted it to Gandhiji.

482. SPEECH AT PUBLIC MEETING, PALGHAT[1]

January 10, 1934

Early in the morning, I entered Malabar—with due deference to our friends who call themselves sanatanists—the land of inequalities. As I was passing by familiar places the face of a solitary Nayadi, whom I had seen during the previous visit, rose before my eyes.[2] It was about ten or eleven in the morning when, in the midst of a discussion about untouchability, unapproachability and invisibility, all forms of which are found in no part of the world except in Malabar, a shrill voice was heard. Those who were talking to me said, 'We can show you a live Nayadi.' The public road was not for him. Unshod, he was walking across the fields with a noiseless tread. I went out with the friends and saw the Nayadi. I asked him to come and talk to me. Evidently he was frightened and he did not know when a blow would descend upon him. Trembling he talked to me. I told him that the public road was as much for him as for me. He said, 'It cannot be so. I may not walk on the public road.' I close that scene and ask the sanatanists or anybody else to show me the authority in defence of this inhuman conduct. You will find me smiling with you, laughing with you, and cracking jokes with you, but you may also know that behind all those jokes and smiles and laughs, the face of the Nayadi and that scene will keep haunting me throughout my tour in Malabar.

As I was coming here, I was greeted by black flag demonstrators mixed with national flag demonstrators. I tell you that I appreciated the black flag demonstrators more than the national flag demonstrators because I could see untruth in its nakedness behind the black flag. What if those who had black flags had smeared themselves as Brahmins do? He is no Brahmin merely because he carries a black flag or red flag and has marks on his forehead. Brahminhood is not known by external marks. The scriptures I swear by and in whose defence I would love to die tell me that he alone is a Brahmin who knows Brahman. Brahminhood is the essence of humanity, self-effacement, pity. All those

[1] The meeting, held at 8.15 in the morning, was attended by about 4,000 persons. Addresses of welcome were presented to Gandhiji by the Municipality and the Taluk Board.

[2] *Vide* Vol. XXXV, pp. 144-5.

virtues which our ancestors have taught us to prize have to incarnate themselves in a Brahmin. He is a Brahmin who is a living treasure of scriptures, but not he who makes a demonstration of untruth by carrying a black flag.

I have come to Malabar to speak out of the very depths of my soul. There are many things in Malabar over which, as you know, I have gone into raptures. You have scenery which is second to none in the world. Man, if he behaves himself, can live an easy life in Malabar. Woman in Malabar is the freest in India. All the women I have seen in Malabar have a majesty which has always commanded my respect. As you know, I had the pleasure of meeting the ex-Maharani of Travancore. Her simplicity commanded my admiration and at first sight I fell in love with her. But there is nothing to be proud of in the Malabar untouchability. It is the vilest thing on earth. I want you to wipe out this shame of untouchability from Malabar; and if you can do it, the whole of India naturally will follow; and you can do it if you will. I have entered Malabar in high hopes. It is for you to fulfil it or frustrate it. Only write down this prophecy in your hearts that, if untouchability as we practise it today lives, Hinduism perishes. I ask you to believe in what I am saying and to save Hinduism from impending doom. You have the opportunity of making your choice. Make it now or never.

Harijan, 19-1-1934

483. SPEECH AT WOMEN'S MEETING, PALGHAT[1]

January 10, 1934

Do you know why I have come here? I have come here to ask you to do penance. I have come here to ask you to forget that there can be a single human being who can be called 'untouchable'. You, the women of Malabar, are freer than any women in any other part of India. And if you choose to, you can save Hinduism from peril. Even if millions of people came and said that untouchability was a divine institution, I will repeat it is an institution of the devil. I have just now come from a little settlement where I saw Nayadi brethren and some sisters. It is your shame and my shame that they have got to live on a little rice thrown at them from a distance. I have nothing more to

[1] The meeting, held at Gowder Picture Palace, was attended by about 1,000 women.

say to you. And if you want to commence by doing penance, then you will commence by discarding your ornaments and silver to contribute funds to help these helpless human beings.

The Hindu, 12-1-1934

484. SPEECH AT MEETING OF NAYADIS, KUZHALMANNAM

January 10, 1934

Well, I have received this address, which I suppose you have not read. Therefore whatever is written in the address will have very little value and this I regard as a breach of truth. As a matter of fact, if you would have read this address to me in Malayalam, then I might have known that you have represented your own feelings and it would have some educative value. Also, your lot was not unknown to me. I have just now come to Malabar, as I am touring in other parts of India for one purpose only, namely, to abolish distinction between Nayadis and non-Nayadis. There is no sin as great as unapproachability or untouchability. So long as Harijans are crushed by that devil called untouchability, we have to work to crush that devil. I want that untouchability must be wiped out of Hinduism, or Hinduism would perish. I would like you to take part in the movement for purification in the best manner possible, taking advantage of every other facility that might be offered, in the way of education, to your children and yourself. If you are given to the habit of drinking, you must give it up; if you do not observe the simple laws of hygiene you must observe them. You must also observe sanitation and must be clean both externally and internally.

The Hindu, 11-1-1934

485. SPEECH AT WOMEN'S MEETING, GURUVAYUR

January 10, 1934

FRIENDS,

I thank you for the address presented to me and the purse. This is the first place in Malabar where an address has been presented by women. By that if you mean that you represent the women of the taluk, then it means that men have no addresses to present to me. It may be that you are not touched by the spirit of self-purification. I see that the women of Malabar have

not summoned sufficient strength to present an address both on behalf of men and women. The women must lead the battle against untouchability. In point of education, Malabar women are much more advanced than their sisters in other presidencies. I want you to turn this to the best possible advantage. When I put to auction articles presented to me I hope that women would put to shame men by taking them for higher prices. I can point out that you can commence this today by offering one bangle, necklace, etc. But you are smiling or laughing. I take it seriously. Women in less advanced parts of India like Madras and Andhra commenced to bid by offering two or three bangles. I shall be presently putting the women's spirit to test as soon as I finish a few remarks. I want to tell the sisters who have gathered here that after I entered into Malabar this morning I have been considering what special message I can deliver, because Malabar shows this disease of untouchability in a most aggravated form.

I feel that if the women of Malabar determine to work for this cause with redoubled energy, this devil can be wiped out. In other parts of the world, women won their rights by making sacrifices and suffering. But for Malabar women it should be a double speciality, and that for the simple reason that the women of Malabar occupy in India a most unique position. Therefore, if the women of Malabar led a battle against the devil of untouchability, it would be wiped out soon. It is only in Malabar, I discovered on entering, that they are dressed in spotless white garments. It is only of late that the fashion has grown among women of wearing variegated colour garments. Yet, I have noticed that colours are not so much loved in these parts as one would find in other parts of India. I do not know the secret of your domestic life. But I have flattered myself with the belief that this white garment of women of Malabar represents their internal purity. I hope that my belief would be well-placed if untouchability is removed root and branch in Malabar. I suppose, in point of education, the women of Malabar will carry the palm. What I want the women of Malabar to do is to save Hinduism from impending danger. I would like you to throw overboard your laziness and indifference whatever it may be. I would like you to keep watch very vigilantly as you would do over babies. You will treat your babies with affection. It is not so with your religion. The more vigilant you are, the more scientifically precise you would be. Before you, the women of Malabar, lies a mission. Will you try to abolish the distinction between high and low? Believe me, those whom we are consider-

ing as lower than ourselves are not lower in the estimation of God. The prevalence of untouchability is due to insolence which leads to devilish interpretation of religious books. I have never been in the habit of using exaggerated language and if I may seem to be using strong language, I feel that this conviction of mine is a very fundamental one. What I have stated in addressing women applies to men also. You are not free from disbelief. Religion requires more men and women to guard it. To put it briefly, the present movement stands for self-purification.

The Hindu, 12-1-1934

486. LETTER TO YVONNE PRIVAT

As at Wardha, C.P.
January 11, 1934

MY DEAR BHAKTI,

It is just 3.20 a.m. and I have finished reading your letter undated. Women will not think of dates! They work for eternity and therefore they disregard human divisions of time!

Your accusation is, from your point of view, justified. We have been rushing at such a speed that it has become impossible to keep pace with the correspondence. Your letter (previous) is lying with me somewhere but I had no time. Today for very shame I take your letter first in order that it may not go into a bottomless file. Though neither Mira nor I have written to you for some time, you are ever before the mind's eye. Your inseparableness, your ever genial faces and your readiness for sacrifice—these and many such things are a perpetual reminder to me of the times we had together.

I know you are doing good work there. I did read about the church people's revolt against Hitler.

I expect to hear more about the result of Ceresole's[1] visit to Germany. Do please give my love to him.

I am surprised to learn that you are not getting *Harijan* regularly. I am writing to the Editor at once.

I hope both of you are prospering in every sense of the term.

I say nothing about me, as you will learn all about me from *Harijan*.

[1] Pierre Ceresole, a Swiss conscientious objector to war, who founded the International Service

With our love to both of you,

BAPU

[PS.]

Devdas has just come out of prison. Ba, Pyarelal and Mahadev are still in jail.

BAPU

From a photostat: G.N. 2337

487. *SPEECH AT PUBLIC MEETING, GURUVAYUR*[1]

January 11, 1934

FRIENDS,

I would like you all to give me perfect silence.[2]

We have here a forcible illustration of the age-old truth that 'Man proposes but God disposes'. I had hoped to be able to speak to you on subjects of the greatest importance to you, to me and to the whole of the Hindu world. Instead of being able to do that, I have been obliged to devote precious forty minutes to a scene that I witnessed this morning.[3] I found two fellow countrymen lying here, stretched on the platform, one of them bleeding through the mouth and both of them apparently senseless. The first thing, therefore, that fell to me to do was to give the best attention that was possible for me to these fellow countrymen. And so they have been sent under the charge of Prof. Malkani to the dispensary here for medical attention. In so far as a lay nurse like me can judge, I do not think that their lives are in any way in danger. And let us all pray that they may soon be up and doing.

I understand from the two other friends who have come here on behalf of the All-India Varnashrama Swarajya Sangh that they had all come here on behalf of this Sangh. They had as perfect a right to attend this meeting as any single one of you. They had a perfect right to stage a hostile demonstration, if they intended to, on a peaceful footing. However repugnant it might appear to me that those who represent sanatan dhar m should resort to such demonstration, I perfectly recognized their right

[1] The meeting was attended by about 2,000 people.

[2] This sentence has been taken from the *Hindu* report.

[3] Just before the meeting started there had been a scuffle between the volunteers and two sanatanists, Radheswara Sastri and Kalpanathji, resulting in serious injuries to both. *Vide* also p. 493.

to make such a demonstration yesterday at Palghat, and I had no hesitation in making public reference at the meeting there to their demonstration more than to the demonstration of those who had come to greet me out of affection for me and sympathy for the cause. And I gave then and there the reason for my saying that I appreciated this black flag demonstration more than the demonstration of affection. I must not repeat the reason here, but I must refer you to the public speech[1] if at all it finds publication in any of the local journals. Here I want only to say that it was a matter of deep grief to me to find that these two countrymen were hurt, no matter for what cause, no matter by whom. If any single volunteer or any single person connected with the organization of this meeting had any hand in assaulting these friends, I have no hesitation in saying that he has disgraced the cause and has hurt Hinduism, which he thought he was serving.

I have said repeatedly that this cause of Hinduism can only be served by men and women who are above suspicion and who have a character to keep and to lose. In a movement of self-purification there is no room for a hasty word, for a hasty action, for abuse, certainly not for bodily harm. And if there are any persons here present who were instrumental in causing hurt to these countrymen of ours, whose lives should be as dear to you and to me as our own blood relations', then I invite them to purge themselves of that guilt by making a public declaration of their having done this injury and taking the pledge never to repeat such a dishonourable act.

Keenly and deeply as I feel the taint of untouchability and deeply as I feel convinced that, if this untouchability is not removed root and branch from Hinduism, Hinduism is bound to perish, I would not have untouchability removed by force or show of force or compulsion of any kind whatsoever. Removal of untouchability is not a matter of law or of compulsion. Removal of untouchability is a matter of change of heart, prefect purification on the part of millions of Hindus. And that can only be brought about by the sacrifice of thousands of workers themselves, and not by causing injury to other people. Hence has every scripture that I have read pronounced from the house-tops that religion can only be defended by *tapascharya*. I will, therefore, beseech every one of you, who crowd round me wherever I go, to remember that this movement is a movement of personal, individual self-purification and self-conviction. And if you cannot approach this

[1] *Vide* "Speech at Public Meeting, Palghat", pp. 460-1.

question from that point of view, I would far rather that I was deserted by you and that all the meetings were deserted by you. And if any man or woman is eager to come and listen to me or to give me an ounce of milk, he or she should do so, provided he or she has got that complete identification with the cause and a perfect spirit of self-purification.

Having said this and having made this declaration of my faith under the shadow of the great temple of Guruvayur, I would like to make this appeal from the bottom of my heart to those who are organizing the activities of the Varnashrama Swarajya Sangh, and kindred bodies also, to understand that they will not defend what they call sanatan dharma by staging demonstrations of the character that they have been doing. They sent a body of men throughout the tour in C.P. who wanted to fall prostrate before the car and impede my progress at every stage. There were often clashes between volunteers who were looking after me and this body of six or seven young men. Fortunately, no serious or untoward event happened, though scratches certainly were inflicted on either side even during the C.P. tour. I quickly made friends with those people who were staging those obstructive demonstrations and told them as earnestly as I could that that was not the way to protect Hinduism.[1] Some of them were youngsters who did not even know what they were doing. With the exception of one, I doubt if any of them had any idea of the elements of Hinduism. And I had hoped here also that, if there were such men who wanted to stage demonstrations, I should come in touch with them, discuss with them, understand them and know who they were. But I was sorry that hardly had I put my foot in Malabar when I was faced with the scene that I witnessed here. It would have been better if I had been able to make their acquaintance before and ascertained what they wanted to do. But they chose to take a different course. I still invite them to meet me and tell me what they would exactly want me to do; and, short of stopping this tour, I would make every facility for them, and every convenience for them to express their thoughts or even to make whatever peaceful demonstrations that they might want to stage. But what I am most anxious to avoid is *goondaism* in every shape and form on the part of either party. I give the same credit to those who call themselves sanatanists for honesty of purpose that I would claim for myself, but both must have an equal right to give expression to their views and mould

[1] *Vide* "Discussion with Swami Lalnath", pp. 250-1.

public opinion. After all, sanatan dharm is not the prerogative of one set of people. I claim myself to be a representative of sanatan dharma in every sense of the term that they claim. I base my vehement opposition to untouchability upon the same Shastras by which they swear, and I should stand by my interpretation of the Shastras even though I were the solitary one amongst the millions of Hindus; because the same Shastras tell me that I may not resist the inner call of my fundamental being. Thank God, however, that I do not stand alone in the interpretation that I have been placing before you. On the contrary, there are learned *shastris* who have just as much right to interpret the Shastras as those who call themselves the exponents of sanatan dharma. And they give precisely the same interpretation that I have placed before tens of thousands of men and women. And it is my settled conviction, based upon an unbroken experience extending over a period of nearly fifty years, that untouchability as we practise it today has absolutely no warrant whatsoever in the Hindu Shastras. I claim that Harijans have precisely the same common rights of worship, of use of public institutions and in all other walks of life that the tallest of Hindus enjoy in common with the rest of Hindu mankind. And, therefore, I have not the shadow of a doubt that caste Hindus will not have performed their elementary duties by Harijans until they have thrown open the gates of Guruvayur and such ancient temples to the Harijans, precisely on the same terms on which they are open to other Hindus.

But I have infinite patience; and, as you know, although Kelappan's fast had progressed for many days, although many of these reformers were actually in the temple threatening to declare a sympathetic fast with Kelappan and although the reformers thought that the prize was almost within their grasp, I sent a peremptory telegram[1] from my own fasting bed, calling upon Kelappan to suspend the fast and to withdraw the men who were inside the Guruvayur temple. And I did so because I felt that the fast was premature and I smelt coercion in it. I mention this in order to show that I will not be guilty of being party to the opening of a single temple under coercion. But I do want temples to be opened where public opinion is absolutely and clearly ripe for the opening of those temples. If there is any legal obstruction in the process, I want that legal obstruction to be removed. That is the meaning, and the only meaning, of the Temple-entry

[1] *Vide* Vol. LI, pp. 150-1.

Bill, and no other. This Bill simply removes the powerlessness that many trustees today feel about opening the temples under their charge because of the legal obstruction. There is not the slightest trace of compulsion or coercion about this Temple-entry Bill or the kindred Bill called the Anti-untouchability Bill.

But I heard a whisper this morning that behind this temple-entry agitation there is a nefarious design, if not on my part, on the part of my co-workers, that we should take possession of these temples and own them. I have no hesitation whatsoever in categorically denying this statement. I have certainly no such design whatsoever, and I do not know of a single co-worker who has any such design. And if there is any such co-worker who has such a design, he has no place whatsoever on this platform. The possession will remain undoubtedly in the hands of those who are today lawfully in possession.

A kindred question that was asked was whether behind this there was also a design to undermine Brahminism. I can only tell you that I cannot be guilty of any such design; for, to me to undermine Brahminism is to undermine Hinduism. This does not mean endorsement of the claim that the Brahmins, so called, may put forth today. No man can be accepted as a Brahmin by society merely by reason of his birth. The Shastras themselves say that a born Brahmin who does not act according to the requirements of Brahminism will forfeit his right to be called a Brahmin by the people in general. There are Brahmins themselves today in this very movement who say that they cannot be called Brahmins unless they carry out the precepts of the Shastras referring to them. I believe that the Brahmin is the cornerstone of Hinduism, as of every other religion. But there you must understand the meaning of the word Brahmin. The Brahmin is the person who has realized Brahman. If he has not that realization in every act of his, he shows that he is ever after it and nothing else. Such a Brahmin demands my ten thousand prostrations every morning, but not the Brahmin who is dictated by self, who is multiplying himself[1] day after day and thinks mostly of himself, rarely of others, nor even the Brahmin who smears himself with ashes from top to toe and can punctiliously and correctly recite the Vedas. It may be necessary for him to smear himself with ashes. It is necessary for him to translate the Vedas in his own life. It is necessary for him to exhibit Brahman in every act of his life. It is necessary for him to be pure and to impart that purity to all his

[1] *The Hindu* report here has: "who has multiplied insults".

surroundings. It is necessary for him to be ever ready to die that others may live. Now you understand what regard I have for the true Brahmin and Brahminism.

Having heard this probably the writer of a printed letter which was placed in my hands this morning does not want replies to the several questions which he has put me and to which he has expected replies this morning. But I can say this much to him that, if he wants a detailed reply to every one of the questions that he has raised here, he can get it by turning to the file of *Harijan*. He will there find also that, in putting the interpretations that he has put in his letter on several things, he has undoubtedly misread the message of the *Gita* and the message of Hinduism.

Lastly he has asked for an interview with me. I am sorry that he cannot have it at Guruvayur, but he can have it at Calicut on the 16th instant at ten o'clock in the morning. I had an invitation for a discussion yesterday at Palghat with some learned pundits. I was sorry to have to disappoint them so far as Palghat was concerned, because, when I received their invitation, I was making preparations for leaving Palghat. But I have given them ten o'clock in the morning at Calicut on the 16th instant, and I would be glad to see this friend and any other friends who may wish to converse with me on every one of the points that I have discussed here and any other points that may arise in the course of that discussion. Though the 16th instant is supposed to be an off day, it is not a day of recreation for me. Therefore I was obliged to restrict the interview to half an hour in my letter to the pundits. But I propose now to devote one hour for that discussion, so that the pundits may have the whole half hour to themselves, if they chose to take it.[1] I have absolutely nothing to withhold from any single person, nor have I the slightest desire to hide my ignorance. I have already set forth my limits. I do not profess to be a learned man in any sense of the term. I profess to be a humble seeker, ever ready and ever anxious to follow literally every precept of Hindu religion as I know it. I, therefore, freely confess that, if the pundits or anybody else invited me to a recital of the Vedas or an exposition of the Vedas and so on, they would floor me entirely. But they will not easily dislodge me from the position that I occupy. If a knowledge of God or if a knowledge of the fundamental precepts of Hinduism had

[1] The pundits did not accept the invitation. Instead they wrote to Gandhiji that they would see him if he was prepared to discuss the Shastras with them not for an hour but for days together and that too in Sanskrit.

depended upon a meticulous knowledge of all the Vedas and a forest of books, then hardly any person would be able to say, 'I know something of God.' But these scriptures say that to know God is possible for every single human being on earth if he purifies his heart.

I must thank you sincerely for the silence with which you have listened to me. Now I want you to join me in prayer to God Almighty that He may direct our steps in the right direction and that He may give us the strength that is necessary to exorcize this devil of untouchability from our hearts.

Lastly, please remember that those who believe that untouchability is an evil and who believe also that it can be exorcized only by self-purification should never hurt a single hair of those who are opposing this movement. On the contrary, you and I have to see to it that we win them over by our own correct conduct and by gentle persuasion. I, therefore, ask you to treat those two friends, who are now in the dispensary, and those who might be representing the Varnashrama Swarajya Sangh, with respect and affection and as your guests. Irrespective of what they may do, let them experience the warmth of your hospitality and affection and not your bitter reproach.

Harijan, 26-1-1934, and *The Hindu*, 12-1-1934

488. SPEECH AT PATTAMBI[1]

January 11, 1934

It has given me some surprise that in Malabar, the land of eternal green, you have to use artificial paper flowers. I thought that in Malabar, where Nature has been so beneficent to you, you could avoid all artificiality. But I suppose that in order to appreciate the beauty of this land you require the help of a person who comes from a treeless desert as I do. Just as you have gone in for artificiality in the matter of flowers, you go in for artificiality in the matter of untouchability, and then you think that that artificial product comes from Divinity itself. I have come to warn you against the belief that untouchability, unapproachability or invisibility can have any divine sanction. In my opinion it is one of the greatest sins that we, Hindus, have been committing against man and God. You degrade human beings, as we have been doing in this part of the world, and

[1] Extracted from Chandrashankar Shukla's "Weekly Letter"

then to say that they are what they are because of their past deeds is a complete caricature of the law of karma. I claim to know somewhat, from first-hand evidence, of the working of the law of karma, because practically a period of fifty years I have devoted to find out what this law of karma could be. And this much I do know that to apply it to everybody else but ourselves is to distort it altogether; and if I had more time than I have at my disposal, I could show to the satisfaction of every one of you that you can never apply the law of karma as you apply it to the Nayadis and others. If we were to apply the law of karma as I have suggested, that is to say, towards ourselves, you would find the land here and elsewhere transformed. I have, therefore, come to beseech every one of you to exorcize this ghost of untouchability. If you do not, you may be sure that that ghost will eat us up.

Harijan, 19-1-1934

489. *NOTES*

Friendly Discussion Always Welcome

During my brief stay in Madras I saw in the papers that a public appeal signed by certain gentlemen was made to me. In it, I was asked to hold a public discussion about untouchability. Later on I received a printed copy of that appeal, with the following opening words typed at the top:

> As a man posing to know more, please come out and discuss. Don't say, "No time, no time". It is a shame to say so when your very existence is questioned. World will laugh at you and will mock at you.

Then follows this astonishing paragraph:

> Abandoning all his political activities which had really brought him into the limelight of Indian politics, destroying—for all practical purposes—the great Indian National Congress which had made him its virtual dictator and blindly entrusted its destiny into his hands and agonizing not merely the orthodox *sanatanadharmis* but also all lovers of Indian nationalism in the land, Mr. Gandhi has, of late, begun a whirlwind propaganda against untouchability and in favour of temple-entry legislation, whereon he has been putting forth his *ipse dixits* and *obiter dicta* before the public, not as his own individual views or in the name of Rousseau, Tolstoy, Lenin, etc., but under the banner of sanatan dharma, sociology, abstract justice and so on!

I had some such appeal again whilst I was travelling in Nellore District. The telegram inviting me to a discussion says:

> It appears to us that you have not understood the Hindu dharma and have been leading the Hindus astray from the path of true moral and religious life.

I was not able to reply to these invitations there and then: the last invitation was received at Venkatagiri[1] at 10.o'clock at night. The next day I was to reach Tirupati, near which I was to go to the proposed discussion. I had to be content with sending a verbal message through my host at Tirupati. As to the first invitation, I had sent the message that I was ready to hold a friendly discussion with anybody and to be convinced of my error, if it could be brought home to me. I had to say that my time was limited and that the discussion would only take place, at my decision, wherever it might be for the time being. My limitations I had set forth in these columns times without number: I am no Sanskrit scholar, but I know sufficient to detect errors in translations that may be given to me. I claim to have read the Shastras to my satisfaction, and I claim to have endeavoured from my youth upwards to put into practice the fundamental precepts of the Shastras. Thus I have no hesitation in putting before the public, with the utmost confidence, the conclusions I have reached regarding certain fundamentals of Hinduism. One of the conclusions I have reached is that there is no warrant in the Shastras for untouchability as it is practised today. My conclusion is supported by *shastris* no less learned than those who challenge my conclusion, and the former claim to be just as good sanatanists as those who hold the opposite view, but I always believe in regarding opponents with respect and, therefore, listening to what they might have to say. I have held discussions with them more than once, and these have resulted in strengthening my convictions. Therefore, whilst I feel that my opinion will not be shaken by any such discussions, I am quite willing to find time for those who would be good enough to suit themselves to my daily engagements. I dare not disturb the programme that has been settled in advance for several months to come. I have already had discussions with sanatanists during the tour at several places. If those who write to me directly or indirectly through the Press will observe the laws of common courtesy and if they have the desire to find a basis for common work, I have no doubt that there are many points of agreement,

[1] On December 30, 1933

even on the question of temple-entry and the proposed legislation. Much misunderstanding can be removed by mutual and friendly discussion. I may mention for the information of the general reader that, as against sanatanists who are enraged against me and fling all sorts of abuses at me, I frequently meet those who, having understood the central point of my message, have become supporters. I have no weapon with me except the one of an appeal to the reason and heart of the people. The reform that I am advocating can only come through a change of heart on the part of millions of Hindus. Therefore, it is in the interest of my mission that I lose not a single opportunity of meeting my opponent, whenever it is possible for me to do so.

Harijan, 12-1-1934

490. LETTER TO MANILAL AND SUSHILA GANDHI

January 13, 1934

CHI. MANILAL AND SUSHILA,

I got the letters from both of you. I hope you get my letters regularly. Of late I have not missed a single mail. With my last letter I had enclosed a copy of Ba's letter.

Sushila has given sufficiently detailed news about Shanti. If he does not waste money in fanciful ventures, I am satisfied.

Sushila wishes to know who are in my party. I think I have already written about that. Chandrashankar, Mirabehn, Om, Kisanbehn (Premabehn's friend), Professor Malkani (Thakkar Bapa's representative), two accountants—Vishwanath and Damodar—one store-keeper Sharma and one typist—these form the party.

Personally I like Sita being talkative and mischievous. It is for the parents to put these qualities to good use. They can in this way impart a good deal of education. Naughtiness and talkativeness are a kind of energy, like steam. The energy of steam is conserved and used to drive big trains and steamboats. A child's energy can be used in a similar manner. If we understand it and use it wisely, it can produce excellent results. Instead of making Sita write the letters of the alphabet, you should teach her just now to draw geometrical figures. After that you may teach her to draw pictures of objects and last of all to write the letters. But before doing that you should teach her to recognize the letters, and to understand the meaning of words. You can give her some knowledge daily through stories. You

can easily teach her something about history, geography, science and tell her stories from the *Ramayana* and the *Mahabharata*. She can learn all these things in play. This will not tire you; on the contrary you will enjoy teaching her in this manner. Through this you yourself will learn something daily and Sita will get the best possible education. She can learn English, Gujarati and also Hindi at the same time. What help do you give to Manilal?

Did either of you see West? Please meet him and give me some news of him. I shall be satisfied if he is not unhappy. You should show yourself always ready to help.

Ba seems to be all right. This time she does not appear to enjoy as much freedom as before.

I did not understand Pragji's letter to you. I do not remember in what context we had the talk and what I had said. In any case, what I may have said does not apply to you two. The facts are not the same in all cases. We may have discussed what his duty was in India. It is of course true in a sense that, if the struggle here succeeds, the solution of the problem in that country will soon follow. But that certainly does not mean that anybody should leave that country and come away to India. The rule that 'better is death in the discharge of one's duty'[1] is perfectly true in this case. You two, therefore, should go on doing the work which is your dharma at present. It will be enough if you do not depart from the path of dharma in doing that work.

Devdas has been released. He will spend his time in Delhi and other places for the present. He will come and see me. He has kept good health. He paid a visit to Kanti. The latter has displayed boundless courage. He doesn't leave jail at all. Let us see how long he keeps it up.

Kishorelal can be said to be a little better. The fever has not yet wholly left him.

Write to Devdas and Lakshmi. And continue to write to Ramdas and Nimu regularly. I hope you are getting *Harijan*.

Blessings from
BAPU

[PS.]

I wrote this letter a little after 3 a.m. before prayer time in a town called Tellicherry.

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 4814

[1] *Bhagavad Gita*, III. 35

491. LETTER TO DAHYABHAI PATEL

January 13, 1934

CHI. DAHYABHAI,

I have your letter. I got three letters almost simultaneously which may be regarded as an instance of telepathy.

Mahadev is being tested severely. Possibly he might suffer a little loss of health, though no other hardship. I have sent a detailed message in reply to the letter to Jivanji. However, the next time you have a chance write as follows:[1]

"Whilst I need not receive Mahadev's letters, he must not think that I cannot have time to read them. The *Gita* portion was technical and I felt that there was no immediate need for me to give my opinion. And the fact is that I have so little regard for my own technical meaning of the verses. Where the meaning does not fit in with my interpretation as a whole, I should naturally have to examine it but speaking in general terms one meaning would be to me as good as any other and therefore I should readily accept Mahadev's considered interpretation in preference to my own which after all must have been an adoption of some single author's version. He should therefore prosecute his researches and his work of translation without waiting for my opinion. When it is all completed of course I shall have ample time, God willing, to go through it.

I take it that Mahadev has read B. Shaw's *Adventures of the Black Girl in Her Search for God.* I am sending him today, *Adventures of the White Girl in Her Search for God* by Cff. Maxwell. If he gets it safely, he will acknowledge it in his next letter.

When I reach Belgaum I shall try to see Mani and Mahadev.

Blessings from
BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro–4: Manibehn Patelne, pp. 158-9

[1] The two paragraphs that follow are in English.

492. SPEECH AT PUBLIC MEETING, TELLICHERRY[1]

January 13, 1934

FRIENDS,

I am very much obliged to you for the addresses and the purse you have presented to me. You know the nature of the mission at the present moment taking me from one end of India to the other. In pursuance of that mission early this morning I have come here to ask you to rid yourselves of the devil of untouchability from your hearts. I see in all your addresses there is one note running, namely, that this monster of untouchability might be laid low. Let us not make the mistake of supposing that this is a work that has got to be done by somebody else. It is essentially a work that has got to be done by everybody—by himself or herself—for it is a matter essentially of a change of heart on the part of the caste Hindus or *savarna* Hindus as they are called. They have to cease to think that they are caste Hindus or that some of them are *savarnas* and others *avarnas*. This distinction of high and low has destroyed society altogether and as we want to save ourselves from impending destruction, we must cease to think that anybody on earth is lower than ourselves. The poison of untouchability has spread so far and so wide that even amongst caste and caste there is a grave degree of untouchability. In this distinction of high and low, we have gone further, and the poison has enveloped all the communities. There is untouchability not merely amongst Hindus and Hindus, *savarnas* and *avarnas*, *savarnas* and *savarnas*, but there is untouchability also between Hindus, Muslims, Parsis, and Christians. I am convinced that, whilst there may be other reasons for inter-communal quarrels, I have no doubt whatsoever that untouchability is the main and deciding reason for the majority of these quarrels. Therefore, if we will exorcize this principal manifestation of the devil of untouchability, I have not even a shadow of doubt that we will be able to right the wrong all along the line. One of your addresses mentions that most of the temples are not open to Harijans and that only one temple, opened by the followers of Shri Nara-

[1] The meeting, which was attended by more than 6,000 people, was held at the Tellicherry maidan at 7.30 a.m.

yana Guru, is open to Harijans. I congratulate the trustees of the temple on their liberality and I hope that their example will be followed by other trustees; but it will largely depend upon the temple-going public to bring about that change. If the temple-goers are sincerely penitent and feel that hitherto they have done serious wrongs to Harijans by prohibiting them from entering the temples, I have no doubt that their expression of opinion cannot be challenged and the temples will be soon opened. I am therefore hoping that you will organize public opinion so that the temples may soon be opened to Harijans precisely on the same terms as they are open to other Hindus. I am surprised to discover that there was in some place near here bad blood between untouchables and untouchables, that is between Pulayas and Thiyyas. I do hope that the Harijans all over will set their house in order and rid themselves of untouchability within untouchability. Now you have given me this purse which I only consider as a token of your determination to deal with this evil in a final manner.

The Hindu, 15-1-1934

493. SPEECH AT PUBLIC MEETING, MAHE[1]

January 13, 1934

FRIENDS,

I have a peculiar pleasure in being in your midst since you are in a part of French India. I had the pleasure of visiting Chandranagore in Bengal more than once. But this is my first visit to French India in this part of the country. For me whether it is French India or British India it is one and the same country. The same blood flows through my veins that goes through yours, the same soil, the same atmosphere, the same manners and customs and many things too numerous to mention are common to all of us. But for the difference in the uniform of your police and the French language I read here and there I would notice no difference whatsoever. Therefore it is a matter of no surprise to me that you have, whilst I am passing through Malabar, invited me and presented me with a purse for the Harijan cause. Indeed I would have been surprised, and painfully surprised, if I had found that, whilst I was actually passing through this road, you took no notice whatsoever of the self-styled representative of

[1] At the meeting Gandhiji was presented with addresses on behalf of the public and students of Hindi.

the Harijans. Therefore I am glad to be able to be present in your midst even though it is only for a few minutes. I was glad to discover that an important temple in this place was thrown open to Harijans precisely on the same terms as to other Hindus. I congratulate the trustees on having performed this very simple religious duty. Now, I hope you know what I am after in pursuing this mission. I would like you to understand that mere opening of temples, mere opening of schools for Harijans does not constitute the whole of my mission. It means that *savarna* Hindus have got to purify their hearts and, make due reparations to the Harijans whom they have hitherto suppressed. It means that we should abolish all distinctions of high and low and realize that we are children of one country and as such, should realize that, being children of one country, there can be no distinction of high and low. May God help us to realize this very simple idea. I am glad of this Hindi address and I would like every one of you here to appreciate this message of Hindi.

The Hindu, 16-1-1934

494. SPEECH AT OPENING OF DISPENSARY, PAKKANARPURAM

January 13, 1934

I have been invited to open the dispensary that you see in front of you in the name of a young brave worker who sacrificed himself for the sake of his country and died some years ago in about 1921. His name is Balakrishna Menon. And this dispensary will be called after his name. In those days of non-co-operation at its height, he, in common with others, was confined in jail and it is in his memory that this dispensary is to be named. Medical relief has been given to hundreds of Harijans. Within the last four or five months over two thousand patients have been treated free of charge. Let us hope that this dispensary will grow day after day, that is to say, it would be an instrument of ever-increasing service to ailing humanity. I understand that a young medical practitioner has offered to give his services free of charge. Let us hope that such self-sacrificing young men will multiply in this land. We do need young medical men who have the requisite spirit of self-sacrifice and who will consent to live in villages. It is absolutely necessary that Harijans should receive medical aid. I know and I am grieved that

there are medical practitioners in India who disgrace their profession by refusing to touch Harijans lest the touch might pollute them. Therefore, it fills me with joy whenever I find a medical practitioner who is entirely free from those superstitions and at the same time has the spirit of sacrifice to enable him to give his services free of charge. Whilst giving medical relief, providing for education and arranging for free water supply are necessary in the interests of Harijans, there is something still more necessary to be done by the *savarna* Hindus. We have to cease to be patrons. We have been oppressing the Harijans for centuries. We have to purify ourselves from this taint of untouchability immediately and take the Harijans to our bosom. We have to consider them as our blood-brothers and sisters. It is a sin to consider any single human being to be lower than ourselves. It is blasphemy to consider that God can have any partiality with regard to His children. I would consider this dispensary a success if it lends itself to eradicate the distinction of high and low to some extent.

The Hindu, 16-1-1934

495. *SPEECH AT WOMEN'S MEETING, CALICUT*

January 13, 1934

DEAR SISTERS,

I see that all of you are seized with a peculiar fear lest I might induce you and you might feel irresistibly tempted to part with all your ornaments. Some of you have already begun to give your trinkets. I propose to give you tonight a beautiful story of a girl called Kaumudi. I saw her for the first time this morning at Badagara and in response to an appeal I made to the ladies to give their jewellery, and, if they had the desire, all their jewellery, this little girl Kaumudi—I call her "little" comparatively —I suppose she was about 20 years, probably 21[1]—and she came forward and began with her two beautiful bangles, the only bangles she had on her wrists.

I was more than satisfied but not she. Out she came with her very beautiful necklace. I thought she would stop at that. But she would not. Her hands involuntarily went to her ears and she suddenly thought there was something in her ears also, and was delighted to give her ear-rings. I was very deeply touched,

[1] In fact she was 16 years old; *vide* Vol. LVII, "Kaumudi's Renunciation", 19-1-1934.

but I suppressed my emotion at that time. I straightaway enquired whether she was an independent girl or whether she had obtained the consent of her father. And I immediately learnt that she had done this in the presence of her father because he was on the platform helping me to get my addresses and other trinkets. I then learnt that the father was also entirely with his girl in her giving everything that was on her person to the Harijan cause. All she wanted was an autograph for her two bangles. Of course I gave her more than my autograph. I wrote there in Hindi that her great sacrifice would be a truer ornament than her gold and jewel things. Well. She went very delighted. And I had her definite promise that she was not going to ask her father to replace those articles of jewellery. She has enough and more articles to wear and jewellery also. Of course for a Malabar girl this is not an amazing performance. Because so far as my knowledge goes, Malabar girls are the simplest of all the girls in the world. Somehow or other they have left on my mind the impression that they have the least desire for jewellery. I may be wholly mistaken. Anyway that is the impression that they have left on my mind.

I must conclude this soul-stirring story by adding another story. Now nearly ten years ago[1] or more there was a girl in Andhradesha who was married and when I made an appeal to the sisters there—it was an imposing meeting of women in a theatre—she was the first to give me her ornaments. Although Sri Annapurnamma's jewels were comparatively simple, still her necklace or her chain as I might call it was a long heavy chain of pure gold. I must not describe other articles of her jewellery. Alas, she is no more. But let me inform you that she was true to her promise cent per cent that she would not replace those rich articles of jewellery. She had very rich parents, who would gladly have given her all their jewellery to replace hers. But from that time up to the time of her death which took place now three years ago[2] she never wore an article of jewellery. It is my certain conviction that Annapurnamma gained by giving and so has Kaumudi. I have lingered on those two very sacred illustrations and I want to tell you that in discarding your jewellery for a cause so sacred as the Harijan cause you will be doing nothing wonderful. [Women have done such things] when they have taken up the defence of a sacred cause like this. I have to ask

[1] In April 1921; *vide* Vol. XIX, p. 565.
[2] She died in 1927; *vide* Vol. XXXV, pp. 197-8.

you, to beseech you, to purify your hearts of the sin of untouchability, to treat Harijan boys and girls as if they are your own children, brothers and sisters. We have for long ages suppressed Harijans and today if we sacrifice our all for their sake we shall be only making some slight and tardy reparation for all the wrongs inflicted upon them in the name of religion. Therefore, whatever you give, whether it is a trinket or heavy piece of jewellery or silver, I want you to give as merely a token of your determination to rid yourselves of this taint of untouchability, the idea that you are high and somebody else is low. May God give you wisdom to see this very simple truth and enforce it in your life. Now you can give the things, whether jewellery, or silver or paper, whatever you want to give.

The Hindu, 15-1-1934

496. *SPEECH AT PUBLIC MEETING, CALICUT*[1]

January 13, 1934

I am much obliged to you for these addresses that have been presented to me this evening and I thank you for the self-restraint you have imposed upon yourselves by not desiring to read these addresses to me. Only you have thereby appreciated the fact that I have been going from one place to another from day to day, now for over two months, and at the end of the day I am therefore fatigued. You, wise men that you are, have appreciated this fact and absolved me from the duty of having to listen to these addresses. You having exercised this self-restraint, naturally it was up to me to read those addresses and be prepared. But I must say to you that I had no notion whatsoever that I was to have all these addresses nor have I been given copies of these addresses. Had I been given copies I would certainly have read them. However I have no doubt whatsoever that these addresses contain nothing more than what I have noticed in the numerous addresses that I have been receiving throughout these two months or more. Almost without exception they have expressed to me great joy, not only their sympathy with the cause that I am espousing for the time being but they have in these addresses signified their intention, nay their determination, of doing every-

[1] The meeting was held at the Town Hall. Addresses were presented to Gandhiji on behalf of the Municipal Council, Malabar Chamber of Commerce, Taluk Board, Harijan Yuvak Sangh and other bodies.

thing that these various bodies of gentlemen or ladies could possibly do in their own sphere to advance the Harijans' cause.

It has given me a great deal of satisfaction and joy to discover that there is consensus of opinion on the part of the intelligentsia. I would have been painfully surprised if it had been otherwise. Not only has it been so with reference to the intelligentsia but as far as mere assent goes, I have found to my great delight the masses also are equally with this movement. I am not easily self-deluded. I have no doubt that I have, must have, my due share of self-delusion or else life perhaps would be a positive burden to most of us if not to all of us. But due allowance having been made for self-delusion I can say that all these scenes that I witness every day cannot possibly be a matter of masses or classes coming to me to signify their praise or their satisfaction for services that I might have performed in a previous life or in days gone by. This life has rushed and with me it has rushed with such rapidity that it is impossible for me to have a clear photography of the events that have happened and, that being the case, I should be intensely surprised and also disappointed that these classes and masses had signified not only their satisfaction and their sympathy by their presence at these meetings but also given me donations more or less and had done certain acts also as a consideration for those services. I would let that pass by. I am assuming that all your addresses contain a serious and solemn pledge that you are determined to do everything that is humanly possible for you to do to render the reparation that is overdue to the Harijans. Malabar, if one were to draw the untouchability map of the whole of India, I suppose will easily wear the black crown and Malabar would be the blackest spot so far as untouchability is concerned. It is a matter of regret but it is no use ignoring the fact. I would turn this blackness to good account and I would invite you to gird up your loins and make such Herculean effort that at the end of the struggle it may be possible to say of Malabar that Malabar had been in the vanguard of progress in this battle against the monster of untouchability. Let it be said of Malabar that Malabar counted no sacrifices too great for removing this evil of untouchability. And what could be a better and more sacred reminder for this meeting than the portrait of Mr. K. Madhavan Nair?

I had the pleasure of knowing him long ago. When I first visited Calicut I had the honour of being introduced to him but I must confess that I did not know him so intimately as I came to know him when he paid me a visit at Yeravda. I then came into

very intimate touch with him, and when Mr. C. Rajagopalachariar was here and the Guruvayur referendum was going on, naturally I was corresponding with him as with other friends almost from day to day. Then Smt. Urmila Devi and my wife came into close contact with Mr. K. Madhavan Nair. My wife is a simple woman. She knows nothing, she does not know the English language, certainly she does not know Malayalam, but she was able to tell me in her very simple language that she was very much struck by the simplicity of his character. She merely strengthened the impression that Mr. Madhavan had left on my mind and that impression is still indelible. I have the most vivid recollection of my contact with him and what struck me most was his transparent humility. This is his faithful picture and I congratulate the artist on presenting the citizens of Calicut with this picture. I think there you can easily see humility written in his features. I don't think that the artist has enhanced the transparence of his humility. I think the artist is incapable of doing that. To look at Mr. Madhavan Nair and look at the living eye would give you a better illustration of that humility. The whole of his behaviour is on the picture. Mr. Madhavan Nair is in front of me today as I saw him in Yeravda. He stands vividly before me and this is the one peculiar impression that he left on me.

I discovered also that he was a man of very few words. You do not find many people who are economical in the use of language or their words. In his contact with me Mr. Madhavan Nair showed this quality in a supreme degree. His letters were compact, nice, neat and the briefest possible. Whatever he had to say he expressed in a few words and he had finished. That was the man. If you were to recall the men who had died in body but are even now still living, you will discover that they are living not because of their intellectual gifts but because of virtues which you and I and every one of us can cultivate if we have the will and if we will make the necessary effort in order to cultivate them. Therefore I would say you will be doing wrong to the memory of the man whom I have described as I have known him, if you think that you have performed your duty by calling upon me to unveil his portrait and for having witnessed this ceremony and having heard a few words in praise of his memory; nay, you will be doing wrong. But you will be doing the right thing if you will treasure this as a perpetual reminder to you that you also would like to be if not wholly at least somewhat like Mr. Madhavan Nair. At the end, to put a finishing touch,

Mr. Madhavan Nair died in harness so far as the Harijan cause is concerned. He was a true co-worker in the Harijan cause which is a matter of self-purification, repentance and reparation. I give you my evidence that Mr. Madhavan Nair, when he took up this cause, had the spirit in him, for every act that he did in connection with the Harijan cause was an act of sacrifice, repentance and reparation. There was no meanness about anything that he did. May his memory ever remain in my heart and in your own hearts.

I thank you once more for having presented me with addresses. Since I think that this is not the proper time for auctioning these addresses, I hope that tomorrow you will help me to realize some money from these addresses because I know that Calicut will not send me away with disappointment.[1]

The Hindu, 15-1-1934

497. SPEECH AT MALABAR CHRISTIAN COLLEGE, CALICUT

January 13, 1934

It was a great joy to me when I received the invitation to come to you to receive a purse for the Harijan cause and to speak a few words to you. You have naturally expressed your sympathy with the cause. But you boys ought not to be satisfied with the certificate that your Principal has given to the institution and therefore by implication to you also.[2] You are called upon to do something much more vital, to regard untouchability not as an institution descended to us from Divinity but as an institution which has been devised by the devil himself for encompassing our undoing. We, all of us, no matter to what faith we may belong, are children of the same Creator. There is but one Creator. We do say that with our

[1] Gandhiji then unveiled the portrait of K. Madhavan Nair. Later during the day Gandhiji visited the office of the *Mathrubhumi*, a Malayalam daily, and addressing its staff described Mr. Madhavan Nair as the soul of the Trust due to whose ceaseless effort the paper occupied its unique place. It was not too much to say that it had occupied a unique place in Malabar. He appealed to the staff to follow in the steps of the late Mr. Madhavan Nair, who was whole-heartedly in favour of the Harijan movement, without mental reservations or anything of the kind. Pure and simple, it was a religious movement.

[2] The Principal of the College had observed that Harijan boys in the institution were treated on a par with others.

lips, but we deny that profession in every walk of life and in so many of our activities. That lie we ought to get rid of from our lives. And who can do this better than the students? You must therefore make the announcement fearlessly that if we are children of the same God, then we are all equal. Do not in your mind cross-examine and say, 'How can we be equal?' Some of you are very bright boys, and have received prizes and occupy front ranks in the classes, and how can those who are at the top of the class be on a par with those who are at the bottom of the class? This is a fine conundrum for you and me and you ought to solve it wisely and not unwisely. Very often we solve these puzzles as we solve puzzles in arithmetic and geometry. If you are able to solve these wisely, then I will give you illustrations of earthly parents. Those of you who have brothers will realize that all have not the same degree of intelligence and of virtues. You are not certainly of the same age. You do not enjoy the same vigorous constitution. And yet do you find your parents distinguishing between you and those who are brighter and more diligent? On the contrary perhaps your parents will give more to those who are helpless and are in need of help than to those who are brighter and well able to take care of themselves. Do you suppose then that the Divine Father, the Father of all fathers that the world has ever seen, will treat some from their very birth to be untouchables and therefore the lowest and others to be the highest at the top of the ladder? I suppose this is a self-proved proposition of untouchability as you are practising it today. The purse will be turned to good account if it is given as an earnest of your determination to change your hearts and to regard no person as untouchable on the face of the earth. Religion teaches us to consider ourselves as the lowest and everybody else as the highest. Do all of you behave like that? Untouchability has undoubtedly to go. It is eating into the very vitals of our being and it crushes the very soul. If you are able to understand my words then you will so change your hearts and transform them that you will not allow untouchability in any shape or form to find a residence in your hearts. You will not allow untouchability towards boys belonging to other religions. You will go to Harijan quarters, instead of wasting your time, you will go there, serve the Harijan boys, and find out what their wants are. If your parents give you five pies or whatever it is, you must at least spare a portion of that money for the Harijan boys who are in greater need than yourselves. You will give your leisure minutes for the service of Harijan boys and girls. You will go to their quarters and sweep

them. You must teach them how to lead a clean life. It is not enough that you clean your body but you must clean your heart and soul. The first thing to do, when you get up from bed, is to ask God to keep you clean in heart and body. If you will do these things, the purse that you have given is a token of your determination to get rid of untouchability.

The Hindu, 15-1-1934

498. LETTER TO G. D. BIRLA

January 14, 1934

BHAI GHANSHYAMDAS,

Malkani has shown me your letter. I have written frankly to Biharilal. I send you a copy of my letter. We have to be outspoken and firm in our dealings with him. It does not seem possible in this tour to achieve all that can be accomplished in a walking tour. But whatever has been achieved appears to be good enough. Public opinion has undergone a great change but not much change is evident in the conduct. Let us see what happens. I can see only God's hand in this work. This is not a trite observation. This task is beyond the power of one lone person or even of thousands. Nothing more can be written or said on this subject. It simply means that my faith in God is growing stronger than ever. I am having a direct experience of the feebleness of my own powers.

I hope you are maintaining good health.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a copy of the Hindi: C.W. 7943. Courtesy: G. D. Birla

499. SPEECH AT PUBLIC MEETING, KALPETTA[1]

January 14, 1934

FRIENDS,

It was not a task to me but a real pleasure to be able to drive through this very beautiful tract of the country. I have learnt a great deal of what lies at the back of the addresses to which

[1] The meeting was held to mark the opening of Muthal Thirunelli Harijan Colony under the auspices of the Sahodara Sangham.

you have just now listened. The deceased Subbiah Goundan, it seems, has left by his will all the landed property[1] he ever possessed for the Harijan cause. It is a rare gift and a rather rich gift. A great burden rests upon the executors of the will and the Trustees in connection with this Trust. They cannot make of this colony the success that the testator must have desired it to become, unless they devote themselves heart and soul to the scheme which has to be worked under this bequest. Let me hope that the Trustees or the executors are worthy of the trust that has been reposed in them and that they will discharge the trust to the entire satisfaction of the public. I deliberately say "the public" because the Trust becomes public property immediately it is devoted to public use. It is under this hope and with this assurance that I gladly declare this colony open and wish it every success. The materials for the experiment or realization of the scheme are in front of us all. We have in front of us not one or two but many Harijan brothers. All of us witnessed the music and the dance that they gave us. It was not a matter of enjoyment or amusement for us but it ought to carry a deep lesson to us. I suppose all of you realized as I did at once that there was no music about their instrument nor was there any charm about the dance. But that was the only thing that they do in order to pass their idle hours. The responsibility for the want of music about their instrument and about their dance lies not upon their shoulders but upon your shoulders and my shoulders. We need not have gone into their dance or their music in order to understand their primitive nature. Their appearance, their dishevelled hair and everything about their person is sufficient to tell us how criminally neglectful we have been to our kith and kin. They wear the same loin cloth or the scarf from year's end to year's end, till it turns into rags. They rarely bathe and when they do bathe, you may take it from me that it will not be in specially clean water. Again the responsibility for this disgraceful state of affairs is yours and mine. And if I had the management of this colony I tell you I would straightaway invite these people to live in the colony, give them decent pay and insist upon their taking regular baths and transform them into presentable human beings. I suppose that is precisely what we would do, each one of us, if we discovered suddenly that nearby was our own blood-brother residing in precisely the same savage condition that these brothers of ours are living in. And if that happy state of things is brought about without any loss of time, you and I

[1] Amounting to 165 acres of land

will have more than well spent our time here. This address almost concludes with these words "May your efforts be crowned with success." Well, I can only say that my efforts can never be crowned with success unless your efforts are also crowned with success. For, my efforts merely consist in inviting all the *savarna* Hindus to change of heart by serving Harijans in every way possible. Lastly I ask these Harijan brothers to respond to the call of self-purification.

The Hindu, 16-1-1934

500. SPEECH AT PUBLIC MEETING, CALICUT[1]

January 14, 1934

FRIENDS,

I have just got several purses on behalf of the citizens of Calicut which amount to Rs. 4,388-5-9. On the principle that you may not look a gift horse in the mouth I must in all courtesy thank you for the gifts that you have given on behalf of the Harijan cause. But as a self-chosen or self-appointed Harijan servant I must lodge my respectful protest against the leanness of the purses from the capital of Malabar. You will be surprised to learn that Bangalore, not the capital of Mysore, but the second city in Mysore, not as big as Malabar, produced much more than you have given this evening. And I am fully aware of the capacity of Calicut to give for the Harijan cause. But nothing is lost yet. You have got here many tempting things, and at the end of a few remarks that I want to make, it is open to you and perfectly possible for you to make up for the deficiency and what is today undoubtedly a lean purse can be turned by you into a fat purse.[2]

As I have said from many a platform after entering Malabar, if there was a map of untouchability made for the whole of India, Malabar would be marked as the blackest spot in all the land; and as matters stand today, I suppose you will admit that you will have to plead guilty to the charge. Then if you are convinced of the sin of Malabar, as confessedly you are convinced by the very fact of your giving me this purse, you will admit that Malabar has to make the greatest reparation in order to rid itself

[1] The meeting was held at the beach at 6 p.m. and was attended by 15,000 people.

[2] This paragraph has been taken from *The Hindu*.

of the greatest sin. It does not matter, and it ought not to matter, the least little bit that some of you who are monied men do not originally come from Malabar. Those who make their livelihood or their fortunes in Malabar should realize that every pie they get is tainted with this sin. Therefore, in the matter of reparation and repentance, they stand exactly on the same footing as the original Malayalis.

This morning they took me to a most beautiful bit of Malabar; they took me up the hills with the most romantic scenery. There I was taken to a village called Kalpetta, and I recalled a hymn—I think it was composed by Bishop Heber. But whether it was composed by him or some other bishop, this is the line that I single out from that hymn for your edification. It is said that, as he was approaching this Western coast of India, involuntarily this line came to his lips, or to his pen: "Every prospect pleases, man alone is vile."[1] I have no doubt that he had not this black spot of untouchability in his mind when he wrote this line. The orthodox interpretation of this line is wholly different from the one that I put upon it. But poets can never be confined even in cages of their own construction. Poets write for eternity. Their words are charged with a meaning of which they have no conception when they utter or write them. Scented breezes come from plantations that Nature has designed for man in Malabar. But through untouchability he has violated Nature and thus become vile. We have endeavoured to disfigure God's mightiest creation, namely, man. The soul of man presents a beauty never to be surpassed by any ravishing beauty of vegetation. But the so-called *savarna* Hindus or the so-called high class Hindus arrogated to themselves the right of suppressing a portion of Hindu humanity. They endeavoured, however, vainly, as we shall presently see in a few years, perhaps. But man has left no stone unturned to suppress, in the name of Divinity itself, the soul of man by putting thousands outside the pale of society.

I will tell you what I saw today in Kalpetta in the midst of the ravishing beauty of vegetation. I saw wild specimens of humanity, with a stinking odour. Please do not say hastily that that is why they are untouchables. I want you to think with me a little more deeply than possibly you are prepared to do and

[1] The lines are:

What though the spicy breezes
Blow soft o'er Ceylon's isle,
Though every prospect pleases,
And only man is vile.

realize with me that for this indescribably painful scene you and I are responsible. These very men, in an hour's time, if you desire, can be transformed into beings cleanly and outwardly as respectable as you and I may be. A little hot water, or soap, a little white khaddar, and you will immediately find that they are just as presentable as you and I are. Internally, God alone can be the judge between them and us. It is quite possible, in fact, in my opinion it is quite certain, that we are much more sinful or much viler than they can be. Our slates are sullied with writings not particularly creditable to us. Their slates have still to be written upon. Are you now surprised that, when I saw these countrymen of ours, I involuntarily said in my mind to the poet, 'you were right in saying, "Every prospect pleases, man alone is vile".' Now, put your hands upon your hearts and tell me whether, if you gave up all your wealth and all sisters discarded every article of jewellery of which they are possessed, would it be a sufficient reparation for the injuries that you have been partners in inflicting on these countrymen of ours? I wish to suggest to you that you will be fit servants of Harijans when you have begun the act of reparation by discarding all your possessions for their sake. But I know that is an ideal state of things, and I know also that, if I could possibly carry you along those ideal lines, then India would again be really a land of thirty crores of gods.

But I am labouring under no such delusion. I consider myself a practical idealist. I take from human nature what it yields and go my way. My business is to present to you the realities of the situation, to stimulate your intelligence and your imagination, to touch your hearts and then leave you to do the very best that you can possibly do for a cause so noble and so sacred as that of the Harijans.

I would like you, lastly, to realize that if we, the so-called *savarna* Hindus, failed in this elementary duty by the Harijans during this brief period of probation, Hinduism will be a thing of the past. History teaches us that many a civilization, many a culture perished beyond redemption because of the inherent weakness of the representatives of those bygone civilizations. Do not, therefore, run away with the belief that Hinduism will be an exception and escape the impending doom, if we, Hindus, prove unworthy representatives of the priceless treasures that the *rishis* have left for us.

Harijan 2-2-1934, and *The Hindu*, 16-1-1934

501. LETTER TO NAN AND TANGAI MENON

January 15, 1934

DEAR NAN[1] AND TANGAI[2],

Love and kisses to you. I hope the climate[3] is suiting you and that you are both happy. Are you picking up Malayali tongue? You would write to me frequently.

Love.

BAPU

My Dear Child, p. 120

502. LETTER TO VALLABHBHAI PATEL

January 15, 1934

BHAI VALLABHBHAI,

It is four in the afternoon just now. Today is my weekly silence day. I am writing this in Nagji Purushottam's bungalow in Calicut. Devdas and Lakshmi arrived today. Thakkar Bapa and Shankerlal will arrive tomorrow. I will see the Zamorin[4] tomorrow at 2.30 in the afternoon and then will leave for Trichur at five.

The question is whether Lakshmi should go to Delhi for her delivery or remain in Madras. She and Devdas will see Raja in about two days. They will come to a final decision after that. Devdas has got the permission to go to Delhi, but I think he should spend about six months in Madras to gain experience. Lakshmi would not like her delivery to take place in his absence and Raja would not like it in his. Thus there is a problem within a problem. Doesn't the meaning of life consist in solving even such seemingly trivial problems in the right manner?

I have specially called Shankerlal here for a brief discussion regarding khadi. I observe that perhaps needless expenditure is being incurred in our department. I wish to place before him what I have observed. I think we should stop the needless expenditure on sending khadi from one province to another. I incline

[1] & [2] Daughters of Esther Menon

[3] Of Kodaikanal in the Palani Hills, South India

[4] Of Calicut, now Kozhikode

finally towards the practice followed in Anantpur. The practice followed at Saoli also seems good. Krishnadas [Gandhi] and Jajuji are experts and they complement each other perfectly. Krishnadas is acquitting himself very well. Keshu is quiet. Ramdas is discontented. He also will become calm by and by.

Devdas visited Ba. He is full of praise for her courage. She is of course harassed a little. But without harassment there would be no pleasure in being in jail.

I paid a visit to Guruvayur. There is no resentment there at all. It is true, though, that the Varnashrama Sangh had sent *pahelwans*[1] from North India to demonstrate with black flags and get beaten up a little. Two of them had taken control of the dais. They got hold of a man by his feet, whereupon the young men there asked them to get down. An altercation and fighting followed. The *pahelwans* got beaten up a little. They are quite all right, but they did their play-acting cleverly. I sent the two to a dispensary and started the meeting and went on with it as if nothing had happened.[2] The crowds continue to be as big as ever. Small and big contributions continue to come in. Another Annapurna, named Kaumudi, came into the limelight. She gave all her ornaments.[3] "Who can harm him whom Rama protects?" So we will live as He ordains, do His bidding and dance as He wills.

Two Hungarian women, mother and daughter, met me in Bangalore. Both are expert painters. They lead a simple life. Just now they have dedicated themselves to the service of India. *Bhajan* music fills them with ecstasy.

N. seems likely to go to America. S. too may go. I have not written much to you about their doings. What could I write? Besides, I don't have the time either.

Amala is getting on fairly well.

A letter from Mani is enclosed. I have written to Swami for slivers and the books. Since the books will not be of the same size, I don't know whether he will be able to pack them together. But Swami is resourceful and, if it is possible, he will manage to do that.

Dahyabhai had sent to me Mani's letter to you.

If I go to Belgaum, I will surely try to meet both. But my going there is not certain.

[1] Professional wrestlers

[2] *Vide* "Speech at Public Meeting, Guruvayur", pp. 465-71.

[3] *Vide* "Speech at Women's Meeting, Calicut", pp. 480-2; also Vol. LVII "Kaumudi's Renunciation", pp. 18-9.

Write to Mani that one need not be with one's elders in order to serve them. If one does their work, one serves them. It is not wrong to wish to be near them. On the contrary, it is natural to do so. But there is no necessary connection between serving them and being near them. Poor girl, she would be thinking that her letter must have been forwarded directly to you. But you must have noticed that it had made a trip to Sabarmati for a dip in the river.[1] It thus got moistened at four or five places. This is of course no new experience to us. But it is our resolve —is it not?—to remain contented with whatever happens.

I have not been able to satisfy Gordhanbhai. But he doesn't write to me now. Towards him, too, I have done my duty as I saw it. I have asked him to let me know the total sum received from Vithalbhai and also to send me the correspondence between them. If I get it, I think I shall have to publish it.

Let him always write to me at Wardha. Even if, however, he writes everything only to you and if I get every such letter, I shall be fully satisfied. I want you yourself to guide him in this matter. I take it that you will write about Ba. I have already written to you about Lakshmi. I am writing to Mridula and Nandubehn[2]. Devdas went and looked up Brijkrishna. He is quite well. He has survived. He needs rest, which he is taking.

It is certain that Raja will be released on 6th February.

You should learn not to go on thinking about things, whatever the cause. For that, you should either memorize the *Gita* or learn Sanskrit or go on reciting the Ramadhun both in the straight and the reverse order.

I get no time at all for worrying, so you needn't advise me not to worry.

Blessings to both from
BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro–2: Sardar Vallabhbhaine, pp. 62-5

[1] There being nobody knowing Gujarati on the staff of the Belgaum jail, Gujarati letters written by prisoners were first sent to Sabarmati jail for censoring.

[2] Vijayagauri, wife of Dr. Kanuga

503. LETTER TO GANGABEHN VAIDYA

January 15, 1934

CHI. GANGABEHN,

I did get news of you from time to time. I deliberately refrained from writing to you. As you were permitted to receive only one letter I thought you should be able to get other more important letters.

But, whether I write or not, I always remember all the women workers.

My message to all the women is this: Irrespective of the resolution or promise made or given at the time of the march[1] to Ras, let all the women think again independently and take a fresh decision. I will accept it. I adhere to my previous view. Nobody should persuade anybody else to adopt a particular course. Everyone should decide for herself. It is their religious duty to do so. Each should act according to her capacity and her inclination. It is an accident that I am out of prison. No one should stay in the Red Bungalow. Nobody should stay at any place where he or she is permitted to stay as a matter of favour. A time may come when one may not get a place to live in or anything to eat. We have learnt that it is our dharma to bear such hardships without grumbling and without feeling unhappy about it. This is the essence of the *Gita*. If other people do not now welcome us, it means that they are not in a position to do so. Why should you be unhappy about it? However, things have not yet reached that stage. It will indeed be good if they do. It will be a real test for us.

Every one of the women should not expect a separate letter from me for the present, but I expect them all to write to me.

You should, of course, write for all. And you should pour out whatever is in your heart. If you need anybody's help for writing the letter, you may take it. Everyone should tell me in her letter what work she has been doing.

Blessings from
BAPU

[1] On August 1, 1933; *vide* Vol. LV, pp. 327-9.

[PS.]

All letters should be sent to the Wardha address.

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro–6: G. S. Gangabehnne, pp. 81-2. Also C.W. 8814. Courtesy: Gangabehn Vaidya

504. LETTER TO SULOCHANA A. SHAH

January 15, 1934

CHI. SULOCHANA,

Did you enjoy yourself? Give me an account of how you spent the six months and let me know what you intend to do now. Be quite frank.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 1750

505. LETTER TO PREMABEHN KANTAK

January 15, 1934

CHI. PREMA,

I am writing this only to tell you that I will await the long letter which you propose to write.

Kisan is quite well. I cannot give her as much attention as I would like to.

Go through all the issues of *Harijan*, both Gujarati and English.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 10353. Also C.W. 6792. Courtesy: Premabehn Kantak

506. LETTER TO AMINA G. QURESHI

January 15, 1934

CHI. AMINA,

Write to me a detailed letter. Let me know your reaction after you have seen the children. Do what you think right for the future. Tell me what you did in the jail, what you read and all other things.

Blessings from
BAPU

From the Gujarati original: C.W. 10622. Courtesy: Amina G. Qureshi

507. LETTER TO AMTUSSALAAM

January 15, 1934

MY DEAR DAUGHTER AMTUSSALAAM,[1]

I must not attempt to write more Urdu. I am really too tired now to write any more. The hand aches and it is past 8.30 p.m., silence day. But I must write some letters. I hope you got my letter in the jail. I have told you that you should not come to me.[2] I am far away from you. But if you cannot resist the wish, you must come. You should of course see your mother and Narandas. In any case write to me fully. I hope you are well in body and mind.

Love.

BAPU[3]

From a photostat: G.N. 290

[1] The superscription is in Urdu.
[2] *Vide* p. 425.
[3] The signature is in Urdu.

ADDENDA

1. LETTER TO NIRMAL KUMAR BOSE

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM, WARDHA,
September 24, 1933

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter.

As Sjt. Satis Chandra Das Gupta is well acquainted with my writings I would like you to show your collection[1] to him, and, if he approves, I have no objection to your printing the book. You may show this postcard to him.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat: G.N. 10522

2. LETTER TO BIPIN PATEL

WARDHA,
October 7, 1933

CHI. BABA[2],

I have your letter. Learn to make each letter as beautiful as a pearl. Do come along with Aunt[3]. I would like it. You will certainly get opportunities to play; there are children of your age. Do you write to Grandfather?

Blessings from
BAPU

[From Gujarati]
Bapuna Patro–4: Manibehn Patelne, p. 163

[1] *Selections from Gandhi*
[2] Eldest son of Dahyabhai Patel
[3] Manibehn Patel; *vide* also p. 64.

3. *LETTER TO GOVINDBHAI R. PATEL*

December 25, 1933

BHAI GOVINDBHAI,

On receipt of your letter I inquired and learnt that an invitation had been received from Pondicherry, and most probably I shall be visiting the place. If I go, I should certainly like to call on Shri Aurobindo. It would be a great disappointment to me if I could not see him. If, therefore, you can arrange for a meeting without much fuss, please do so. After the programme is finalized, I also will write and request for an interview.[1]

Blessings from
BAPU

SHRI GOVINDBHAI
SHRI AUROBINDO ASHRAM
PONDICHERRY

From the Gujarati original: C.W. 10739. Courtesy: Govindbhai R. Patel

[1] According to the addressee, the contents of this letter were conveyed to Shri Aurobindo through Mother, and Shri Aurobindo wrote in pencil on the note saying: "You will have to write that I am unable to see him because for a long time past I have made it an absolute rule not to have any interview with anyone—that I do not even speak with my disciples and only give silent blessings to them three times a year. All requests for an interview from others I have been obliged to refuse. The rule has been imposed on me by the necessity of my *sadhana* and is not at all a matter of convenience or anything else. The time has not come when I can depart from it."

4. LETTER TO GOVINDBHAI R. PATEL

January 7, 1934

BHAISHRI GOVINDBHAI,

I have your letter. I had received the postcard, too. I wrote a long letter to Shri Aurobindo four days ago asking for an interview. I am now awaiting a reply. You may, if you wish, send me any literature which you think I should read.

Vandemataram from
MOHANDAS

From the Gujarati original: C.W. 10740. Courtesy: Govindbhai R. Patel

5. LETTER TO GOVINDBHAI R. PATEL

January 12, 1934

BHAI GOVINDBHAI,

I have written to you saying that I had written a long letter to Shri Aurobindo. I have received no reply till today.

I have written to you in reply to your English letter, too, and said that you may ask me any questions you wish to when we meet.[1]

MOHANDAS

From the Gujarati original: C.W. 10744. Courtesy: Govindbhai R. Patel

[1] According to the addressee, he communicated the contents of this letter to Mother and inquired if it was true that Gandhiji had "asked for at least a line in Shri Aurobindo's hand; and Shri Aurobindo has written a full letter in his own hand—which he does not usually do". In reply, Shri Aurobindo wrote in pencil on the note: "Yes, I wrote to him a short letter explaining the nature of my retirement and regretting that I could not break my rule as long as the reason for it existed. It was addressed to Bangalore, I believe, and ought to have reached him, unless it has been pocketed by the C.I.D. I suppose even if he had left Bangalore it would have been forwarded to him. You can write and inform him of the fact."

APPENDICES

APPENDIX I

(A) TOUR PROGRAMME[1]

FROM 7TH NOVEMBER 1933 TO 15TH NOVEMBER 1933

7th November

Selu: Open[ing] of a temple and a public meeting, etc., (morning 9 a.m.)

8th November

6-0 a.m. Departure from Wardha
7-0 a.m. Halt at Bori
7-40 a.m. Arrival at Nagpur
7-40 to 8 Reception at Dhantoli
8-0 to 8-30 Visit to sweepers' quarters, opening of a well recently constructed by the M. C.
8-30 to 8-45 Khalasi Line Untouchable Girls' School
8-45 to 9-0 Sadar Bazar D. C. A. Girls' School
9-0 to 9-15 Chokhamela Hostel
9-15 to 9-30 Pachpaoli D. C. M. School and Mang Boarding
9-30 to 10-0 Mahar Students' Boarding, Untkhana
10-0 to 1 p.m. Rest
1 to 5-0 Katol public meeting, etc.
5-0 to 6-0 Rest
6-0 to 7-0 p.m. Public meeting

9th November

6-0 a.m. to 6-30 Visit to Anath Vidyarthi Graha
6-30 to 10 a.m. Ramtek
10-0 a.m. to 2-0 p.m. Rest
2-0 p.m. Departure for Saoner
3-0 to 4-0 Public meeting, etc.
4-0 to 5 Back to Nagpur
5-0 to 6-0 p.m. Rest
6-0 to 7-0 p.m. Meeting with workers
7-0 to 8-0 p.m. Students' meeting

10th November

6-0 a.m. Departure for Tumser
8-0 Public meeting, etc., at Tumser

[1] *Vide* p. 214.

9-0 a.m. Departure for Bhandara
10-0 to 11-0 Opening of a temple, presentation of addresses
11-0 to 2-0 p.m. Rest
2-0 p.m. Departure for Gondia
5-0 to 6-0 p.m. Rest
6-0 to 8-0 p.m. Public meeting, etc.

11th November

1-20 a.m. Departure by train, change at Nagpur at 5-0
8-0 a.m. to 9-0 a.m. Deoli, in Wardha District

12th to 13th November

Rest at Wardha

13th November

4-0 p.m. Hinganghat
8-30 p.m. Chanda

14th November

6-0 a.m. to 3-0 p.m. Halt at Saoli
6-0 p.m. Public meeting at Chanda

15th November

5-20 a.m. Departure from Chanda
6-30 a.m. Arrival at Warora. Departure for Wani

(The above programme is subject to alteration by Dr. Khare if Mahatmaji's health is unable to stand the strain of the tour.)

(*B*) *CIRCULAR RE: CHANGE IN TOUR PROGRAMME*

CAMP WARDHA,
November 7, 1933

DEAR FRIEND,

RE: CHANGE IN GANDHIJI'S PROGRAMME

It has been found necessary, quite unavoidable, to make a substantial alteration in the order of the programme of Mahatmaji's proposed tour, extending over 9 months—November 1933 to July 1934. After touring in the Central Provinces, where the tour has commenced from today, and after attending the Central Board meeting at Delhi—December 10 to 14—he will go directly to Andhra, and the rest of the Madras Presidency, instead of going up to the Punjab, Sind, etc., and will thereafter work his way to Bengal and Assam and then westward. The new order will, therefore, be as follows:

C. P., Delhi, Andhra, Madras City, Mysore States and Malabar District, Cochin and Travancore, Tamil Nadu, Orissa, Calcutta, Bengal, Assam, Bihar, U. P., Punjab, Sind and Rajputana, Gujarat and Kathiawar, Bombay City, Maharashtra and Hyderabad Dn., and Karnataka at the end of July 1934.

The dates of the tour in the various provinces and other details are given in the sub-joined table. The details of the tour in each province will be settled and filled up by the Provincial Secretaries in consultation with their Presidents in accordance with detailed instructions already issued. But the four elementary rules to be observed are mentioned below:

(1) There should be full four hours cessation of public work for meals and correspondence in the middle of the day, preferably from 10.0 a.m, to 2.0 p.m.

(2) The day's work should not begin earlier than 6.30 a.m. and not [continue] later than 8.0 p.m.

(3) Railway journey is any day preferable to motor journey, but where the latter is unavoidable, it should not exceed 75 miles in one day.

(4) Mondays and Tuesdays in every week are non-working days and should be kept free of any travelling or public engagement. To be accurate, the period from 8 p.m. on Sunday to 8 p.m. on Tuesday is reserved, 24 hours for silence and 24 hours for correspondence and other work.

A. V. THAKKAR,
GENERAL SECRETARY,
SERVANTS OF THE UNTOUCHABLES SOCIETY

(*C*) *TOUR PROGRAMME PROVINCEWISE*

THE PROGRAMME OF GANDHIJI'S HARIJAN TOUR

Two days per week, preferably Monday and Tuesday, will be free from travelling and appointments to give Gandhiji time for correspondence and writing for the *Harijan*. Thus there will be five working days per week so far as the tour programme is concerned.

PROVINCE	TOTAL DAYS	DATES (BOTH DAYS INCLUSIVE)	WORKING DAYS
C. P.	31	8th Nov. to 8 Dec.	23
9TH DECEMBER IN TRAIN AND AT JHANSI			
Delhi	5	10th Dec. to 14th Dec.	3
15TH DECEMBER IN TRAIN—DELHI TO BEZWADA			
Andhra	14	16th Dec. to 29th Dec.	10
Madras City	5	30th Dec. to 3rd Jan. 1934	3
Mysore-Malabar	10	4th Jan. to 13th Jan.	8
Cochin-Travancore	7	14th Jan. to 20th Jan.	5
Tamil Nad	20	21st Jan. to 9th Feb.	10
(INCLUDING 6 DAYS' FULL REST)			
10TH FEBRUARY IN TRAIN—MADRAS TO ORISSA			
Orissa	7	11th Feb. to 17th Feb.	5
Bengal	28	18th Feb. to 17th March	20

Assam	7	18th March to 24th March	5
Bihar	14	25th March to 7th April	10
U. P.	35	8th April to 12th May	20
(Including 7 Days' Full Rest)			
Punjab	14	13th May to 26th May	10
Sind	7	27th May to 2nd June	5
Rajputana	7	3rd June to 9th June	5
Rest at Ahmedabad	7	10th June to 16th June	0
Gujarat-Kathiawar	14	17th June to 30th June	10
Bombay City	7	1st July to 7th July	5
Maharashtra-Hyderabad Dn.	17	8th July to 24th July	11
Karnataka	7	25th July to 31st July	5

This programme must be regarded as tentative and is subject to change, but only when required for the sake of the cause itself.

A. V. Thakkar

Gandhi-Nehru Papers, 1933. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

APPENDIX II

MOHAMMED IQBAL'S STATEMENT[1]

Lahore,
December 6, 1933

"The offer made by the Aga Khan to Mr. Gandhi in London in 1931 still holds good. If under Pandit Jawaharlal's leadership, the Hindus and the Congress agree to the safeguards which the Muslims think necessary for their protection as an all-India minority, the Muslim community will still be ready to serve as camp-followers of the majority community in India's political struggle" says Sir Mohammed Iqbal in a statement issued today referring to Pandit Jawaharlal's charges against the communalist Muslim leaders.

Sir Mohammed Iqbal observes that the Aga Khan made a similar offer to Mr. Gandhi in 1932 but Mr. Gandhi would not guarantee acceptance of his position by the Congress and also the Hindu and Sikh delegates did not endorse Mr. Gandhi's position and further Mr. Gandhi wanted the Muslims not to support the untouchables' claims. After explaining the Muslim attitude towards nationalism and democracy, Sir Mohammed Iqbal puts the straight question to Pandit Jawaharlal, "How is India's problem to be solved if the majority community neither concedes the minimum necessary safeguards to the minority community, nor accepts a third party's award? The position can admit of two alternatives only. Either, India's majority community must ac-

[1] *Vide* p. 328.

cept for itself the permanent position of an agent of British imperialism in the East or India should be redistributed on the basis of religious, historical and cultural affinities so as to do away with the question of electorates and the communal problems in its present form."

The Bombay Chronicle, 7-12-1933

APPENDIX III

EXTRACTS FROM JAWAHARLAL NEHRU'S STATEMENT[1]

. . . I do not think that the Muslim communal organizations, chief of whom are the Muslim All-Parties Conference and the Muslim League, represent any large group of Muslims in India except in the sense that they exploit the prevailing communal sentiment. But the fact remains that they claim to speak for Muslims, and no other organization has so far risen which can successfully challenge that claim. Their aggressively communal character gives them a pull over the large number of nationalist Muslims who merge themselves in the Congress. The leaders of these organizations are patently and intensely communal. That, from the very nature of things, one can understand.

But it is equally obvious that most of them are definitely anti-national and political reactionaries of the worst kind. Apparently they do not even look forward to any common nation developing in India.

At a meeting in the British House of Commons last year the Aga Khan, Sir Mohammed Iqbal and Dr. Shafaat Ahmad Khan are reported (in *The Statesman* of December 31, 1932) to have laid stress on "the inherent impossibility of securing any merger of Hindu and Moslem, political, or indeed, social, interests". The speakers further pointed out "the impracticability of ever governing India through anything but a British agency". These statements leave no loophole for nationalism or for Indian freedom, now or even in the remote future.

I do not think that these statements represent the views of Muslims generally or even of most of the communally inclined Muslims. But they are undoubtedly the views of the dominant and politically clamorous group among the Muslims. It is an insult to one's intelligence to link these views with those of nationalism and freedom, and of course any measure of real economic freedom is still further away from them. Essentially, this is an attitude of pure reaction—political, cultural, national, social. And it is not surprising that this should be so if one examines the membership of these organizations. Most of the leading members are Government officials, ex-officials, ministers, would-be ministers, knights and title-holders, big landlords, etc. Their leader is the Aga Khan, the head of a wealthy religious group, who combines in himself, most remarkably, the feudal order and the politics and habits of the British ruling class, with which he has been intimately associated for many years.

[1] *Vide* p. 328.

Such being the leadership of the Muslims in India and at the Round Table Conference it is no wonder that their attitude should be reactionary. This reactionary policy went so far as to lead many of the Muslim delegates in London to seek an alliance with the most reactionary elements in British public life—Lord Lloyd and company. And the final touch was given to it when Gandhiji offered personally to accept every single one of their communal demands, however illogical and exaggerated they might be, on condition that they assured him of their full support in the political struggle for independence. That condition and offer were not accepted and it became clear that what stood in the way was not even communalism but political reaction.

Personally I think that it is generally possible to co-operate with communalists provided the political objective is the same. But between progress and reaction, between those who struggle for freedom and those who are content with servitude, and even wish to prolong it, there is no meeting ground. And it is this political reaction which has stalked the land under cover of communalism and taken advantage of the fear of each community of the other. It is the fear complex that we have to deal with in these communal problems. Honest communalism is fear; false communalism is political reaction.

To some extent this fear is justified, or is at least understandable, in a minority community. We see this fear overshadowing the communal sky in India as a whole so far as Muslims are concerned; we see it as an equally potent force in the Punjab and Sind so far as the Hindus are concerned, and in the Punjab the Sikhs.

It was natural for the British Government to support and push on the reactionary leaders of the Muslims and to try to ignore the nationalist ones. It was also natural for them to accede to most of their demands in order to strengthen their position in their own community and weaken the national struggle. A very little knowledge of history will show that this has always been done by ruling powers. The Muslim demands did not in any way lessen the control of the British in India. To some extent they helped the British to add to their proposed special powers and to show to the world how necessary their continued presence in India was.

I have written all this about the attitude of the Muslim communalist leaders not only to complete the picture but because it is a necessary preliminary to the understanding of the Hindu communal attitude. There is no essential difference between the two. But there was this difference that the Congress drew into its ranks most of the vital elements of Hindu society and it dominated the situation and thus circumstances did not permit the Hindu communalists to play an important role in politics. The Hindu Mahasabha leaders largely confined themselves to criticizing the Congress. When however there was a lull in Congress activities, automatically the Hindu communalists came more to the front and their attitude was frankly reactionary.

It must be remembered that the communalism of a majority community must of necessity bear a closer resemblance to nationalism than the communalism of a minority group. One of the best tests of its true nature is what relation it bears to the national struggle. If it is politically reactionary or lays stress on communal problems rather than national ones, then it is obviously anti-national . . ..

I cannot hold the Mahasabha responsible for these statements[1] but as a matter of fact they fit in with, and are only a slight elaboration of, the Mahasabha attitude. And they bear out that many Hindu communalists are definitely thinking on the lines of co-operation with British imperialism in the hope of getting favours. It requires little argument to show that this attitude is not only narrowly communal but also anti-national and intensely reactionary. . . .

It is perfectly true that Hindu Mahasabha has stood for joint electorates right through its career and this is obviously the only national solution of the problem. It is also true that the Communal Award is an utter negation of nationalism and is meant to separate India into communal compartments and give strength to disruptive tendencies and thus to strengthen the hold of British imperialism. But it must be borne in mind that nationalism cannot be accepted only when it profits the majority community. The test comes in the provinces where there is a Muslim majority and in that test the Hindu Mahasabha has failed.

Nor is it enough to blame Muslim communalists. It is easy enough to do so for Indian Muslims as a whole are unhappily very backward and compare unfavourably with Muslims in all other countries. The point is that a special responsibility does attach to the Hindus in India both because they are the majority community and because economically and educationally they are more advanced. The Mahasabha, instead of discharging that responsibility, has acted in a manner which has undoubtedly increased the communalism of the Muslims and made them distrust the Hindus all the more. The only way it has tried to meet their communalism is by its own variety of communalism. One communalism does not end the other; each feeds on the other and both fatten. . . .

I cannot say what following the Hindu or Muslim communal organizations have. It is possible that in a moment of communal excitement each side may command the allegience of considerable numbers. But I do submit that on both sides these organizations represent the rich upper class groups and the struggle for communal advantages is really an attempt of these groups to take as big a share of power and privilege for themselves as possible. At the most, it means jobs for a few of our unemployed intellectuals. How do these communal demands meet the needs of the masses? What is the programme of the Hindu Mahasabha or the Muslim League for the workers, the peasants and

[1] Made by Bhai Parmanand, Dr. Moonje and others

the lower middle classes, which form the great bulk of the nation? They have no programme except a negative one, as the Mahasabha hinted at Ajmer, of not disturbing the present social order. This in itself shows that the controlling forces of these communal organizations are the upper class possessing social groups today. The Muslim communalists tell us a great deal about the democracy of Islam but are afraid of democracy in practice; the Hindu communalists talk of nationalism and think in terms of a "Hindu Nationalism".

Personally I am convinced that Nationalism can only come out of the ideological fusion of Hindu, Muslim, Sikh and other groups in India. That does not and need not mean the extinction of any real culture of any group, but it does mean a common national outlook, to which other matters are subordinated. I do not think that Hindu-Muslim or other unity will come merely by reciting [it][1] like a *mantra*. That it will come I have no doubt, but it will come from below, not above, for many of those above are too much interested in British domination and hope to preserve their special privileges through it. Social and economic forces will inevitably bring other problems to the front. They will create cleavages along different lines, but the communal cleavage will go.

I have been warned by friends, whose opinion I value, that my attitude towards communal organizations will result in antagonizing many people against me. That is indeed probable. I have no desire to antagonize any countryman of mine for we are in the midst of a mighty struggle against a powerful opponent. But that very struggle demands that we must check harmful tendencies and always keep the goal before us. I would be false to myself, to my friends and comrades, so many of whom have sacrificed their all at the altar of freedom, and even to those who disapprove of what I say, if I remained a silent witness to an attempt to weaken and check our great struggle for freedom. Those who, in my opinion, are helping in this attempt may be perfectly honest in the beliefs they hold. I do not challenge their *bona fides*. But none the less, the beliefs may be wrong, anti-national and reactionary.

I write as an individual, and, in this matter, I claim to represent no one but myself. Many may agree with me; I hope they do. But whether they do so or do not, I must say frankly what I have in my mind. That is not perhaps the way of politicians, for, in politics, people are very careful of what they say and do not say lest they offend some group or individual and lose support. But I am not a politician by choice; forces stronger than me have driven me to this field and, it may be, that I have yet to learn the ways of politicians.

The Bombay Chronicle, 2-12-1933

[1] Illegible

APPENDIX IV

BAPU'S TOUR PROGRAMMF[1]

Date	Morning	Afternoon	Night
Dec. 28	Train	Vizagapatam	*Vizianagaram
Dec. 29	Anakapalli (till 3 p.m.)	Train	Train
Dec. 30	Buchireddipalem	*Nellore	Venkatagiri
Dec. 31	Renigunta	*Cuddapah	Cuddapah
Jan. 1-2	Rest days at *Cuddapah		
Jan. 3	Vuravakonda	*Anantapur	Train
Jan. 4		*Bangalore	
Jan. 5		*Mysore	

Letters for the day may be sent to place marked with*.

Gandhi-Nehru Papers, 1933. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

[1] *Vide* p. 404.

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CHRONOLOGY

(*September 16, 1933—January 15, 1934*)

September 16: Gandhiji continued to stay at Bombay. Conferred with Jawaharlal Nehru, Sarojini Naidu, G. D. Birla and Cowasji Jehangir.

September 19: Had discussion with representatives of Mill-owners' Association and labourers.

September 20: Annie Besant died; Gandhiji paid tribute to her. Left for Ahmedabad.

September 21: At Ahmedabad; unveiled statue of Chinubhai; laid foundation stone of Maneklal Jethalal Library. Left for Bombay at night.

September 22: In Bombay

September 23: Arrived in Wardha.

September 24: Third 'Harijan Day' observed.

September 29: Sent condolences on K. Madhavan Nair's death.

September 30: In letter to G. D. Birla proposed to hand over Satyagraha Ashram to Servants of Untouchables Society.

October 4: Gave interviews to Rev. Fuji and Rev. Okitsu.

October 8: At public meeting reiterated his decision to devote himself to Harijan work till August 3, 1934.

October 9: Met N. S. Hardikar and Kamaladevi Chattopadhyaya.

October 14: Sent message on fiftieth anniversary of Swami Dayananda's death.

October 18: Spoke at wedding of Prabhudas Gandhi.

October 22: Gave interview to *Unati*.
Vithalbhai Patel died in Geneva.

October 24: In interview to Associated Press Gandhiji paid tribute to Vithalbhai Patel.

October 31: Met K. F. Nariman.

November 2: Wrote to Governor of Bengal on inhuman treatment meted out to civil resisters in Hijli jail.

Before *November 7:* Addressed Harijans at Nalwadi.

November 7: Commenced Harijan tour.
Visited Rama Mandir of Wardha and Lakshminarayana temple.
At Selu opened temple to Harijans; addressed public meeting.
At Wardha spoke at public meeting in evening.

November 8: Arrived in Nagpur in morning.
Spoke at Lendra and Dhantoli.
Addressed meeting at sweepers' quarters, opened well for them.
Visited various Harijan institutions; inaugurated Harijan Mahila Ashram.
Visited Katol, Mopa, Kalameshwar and Dorli.
At Nagpur addressed public meeting in evening.

November 9: Gave interview to the Press in morning.
Visited Khadi Vastralaya, Untkhana Boarding, Navi Shukravari .and Anath Vidyarthi Griha; opened well to Harijans.
Addressed Harijan workers' meeting and University students' meeting.
Visited Kamptee, Kanan, Ramtek, Dumbri Khurd and Saoner during day.

November 10: Gave interview to the Press.
Reached Tumsar, addressed public meeting.
At Bhandara addressed meeting, opened Lakshminarayana temple.
Visited Mohali, Shihora, and Lakhni.
At Gondia, addressed public meeting. Left for Wardha.

November 11: Arrived in Wardha at 7 a.m. Gave interview to the Press.
At Deoli addressed public meeting.

November 12: At Wardha.

November 13: Left Wardha for Hinganghat.
At Hinganghat visited Harijan quarters, addressed public meeting in evening.
Reached Chanda at night.

November 14: Visited Mool, opened two wells to Harijans.
At Saoli visited Khadi Karyalaya and weavers' quarters; spoke at public meeting.
At Chanda spoke at public meeting in evening.

November 15: Addressed public meetings at Warora and Wun in morning.

Visited Brany and Umani.
Reached Yeotmal in evening.
Visited Chokhamela Harijan Boarding and other institutions.
Addressed workers' meeting and public meeting.

November 16: Left Yeotmal for Amraoti in morning.
Visited Dhamangaon, Chandur.
Arrived in Amraoti at 11 a.m.
Addressed Children's meeting, women's meeting and Harijans' meeting in afternoon.
Visited Harijan quarters.
Spoke at Hanuman Vyayamshala and public meeting in evening.

November 17: Visited Kamargaon, Loni, Karanjia, Murtazapur, Balapur, Wadegaon, Wallaya and Shegaon.
At Lasura opened Shiva temple.
At Khamgaon visited Harijan quarters and Harijan hostel. Spoke at Anjuman Mufid-ul-Islam, public meeting and workers' meeting.

November 18: Arrived in Akola at 10 a.m.
Visited National School, Saraswati School, Saraswati Mandir and Harijan quarters.
Had interview with Harijans.
Had discussion with sanatanist Swami Lalnath.
Addressed public meeting and Harijan workers' meeting.
Gave interview to the Press.

November 19: Left Akola in morning.
Visited Ugwa, Keliveli, Akot, Anjangaon and Pathrot.
Reached Chikalda.

November 20: At Chikalda; silence day.

November 21: Left Chikalda.
At Ellichpur addressed two public meetings.
Visited Utkhed and Chandur Bazaar.
At Morsi spoke at public meeting.
Arrived in Badnera at night, addressed public meeting.
Gave message to people of Berar.

November 22: Arrived in Drug.
Visited house of a sweeper, Municipal school, Arya Samaj Girls' School, Khadi Centre and Harijan quarters.
Addressed public meeting.
Visited Kumhari.
Reached Raipur at night.

November 23: Had interviews with Harijans and sanatanists in morning.
Spoke in reply to addresses. Visited Harijan quarters, Khadi Bhandar, Hindu Anathalaya and Sanatani Ashram.
Opened All-India Swadeshi Exhibition in evening.

November 24: At Dhamtari, addressed women's meeting and public meeting; visited Harijan quarters.
Visited Rajim.
At Raipur opened Hanuman temple and two wells to Harijans; addressed public meeting in evening.

November 25: At Baloda Bazaar opened Gopalji temple to Harijans; addressed public meeting.
Visited Bhatapara and Sakti.
At Baitalpur visited Clare Leper Asylum.
At Bilaspur spoke at women's meeting, public meeting and railway workers' meeting.
Returned to Raipur.

November 26: At Raipur.

November 27: Addressed women's meeting in afternoon.
Spoke at Chhattisgarh Harijan workers' meeting and Rajkumar College in evening.
Left for Amgaon.

November 28: Reached Amgaon at 1 a.m., addressed villagers' meeting.
At Risama opened Ganesh temple.
At Lanji visited Harijan quarters; addressed meeting.
Visited Kirnapur.
At Balaghat addressed women's meeting and public meeting; visited Harijan quarters.
Visited Waraseoni.
Arrived in Seoni.

November 29: Addressed women's meeting and public meeting.
Had interview with sanatanists.
At Chhindwara addressed workers' meeting and public meeting; visited Harijan quarters.
Visited Kherwani and Multapi.
Reached Betul.

November 30: Visited Khedi, Savaligarh and Baraling.
At Betul spoke at public meeting; visited Harijan quarters.
At Itarsi addressed public meeting.

December 1: At Kareli addressed public meeting. At Deori opened Shri Muralidhar temple; addressed public meeting.
Visited injured Harijan girl in hospital.
At Anantpur spoke at public meeting; visited Khadi Nivas and villagers' houses; conferred with khadi workers.

December 2: Left Anantpur.
Visited Garhakota.
At Damoh, laid foundation-stone of temple for Harijans; addressed public meeting; visited Harijan quarters.
Reached Sagar at 4 p.m.; addressed women's meeting and public meeting; laid foundation-stone of temple to be built by Harijans for all Hindus. Left for Katni at night.

December 3: At Katni addressed public meeting.
Visited Sihora, Burhagar and Panagar.
Reached Jabalpur at 4 p.m., spoke at public meeting.

December 4: At Jabalpur; silence day; met Dr. M. A. Ansari.

December 5: Conferred with Jawaharlal Nehru, Dr. Ansari, S. Mahmud, K. F. Nariman and Jamnalal Bajaj.

December 6: Spoke at Harijan workers' meeting.
Visited Mandla; addressed public meeting.
Returned to Jabalpur; visited Narayanganj, Barela and Beoharji's temple; inspected night school for Harijans.
At Jabalpur spoke at Gujaratis' meeting.

December 7: Conferred with Harijan leaders and workers.
Visited Swadeshi Museum and Harijan quarters.
At Khadi Bhandar sold khadi; opened Lakshminarayana temple to Harijans.
Spoke at women's meeting and Leonard Theological College.
Left Jabalpur by train.
Arrived at Sohagpur.
Visited Babai.

December 8: Reached Harda in morning; addressed public meeting.
Spoke at public meetings at Khandwa and Burhanpur.
Left for Jhansi.

December 9: Arrived at Bhopal, spoke at public meeting. Visited Bhilsa and Basoda.
At Jhansi addressed women's meeting and public meeting.
Left for Delhi.

December 10: Arrived in Delhi in morning; addressed labourers' meeting.

Visited Harijan quarters, Khadi Bhandar and Jamia Millia Islamia.
Had discussion with Harijans.

December 11: At Delhi; silence day.

December 12: Conferred with Congress leaders.

December 13: Had discussion with sanatanists.
In morning visited Alipur and spoke at public meeting.
Attended meeting of Central Board of Harijan Sevak Sangh.
Addressed students' meeting and unveiled portrait of Motilal Nehru.
In statement to the Press categorically refuted charges made by Mohammed Iqbal.
Met members of Japanese Delegation.
Continued talks with Congress leaders.
At night conferred with Congress workers.

December 14: Continued discussion with Abul Kalam Azad, Jawaharlal Nehru, J. B. Kripalani, Jamnalal Bajaj and Syed Mahmud.
Addressed Harijans' and women's meetings.
Left for Bezwada at 4 p.m.

December 15: In train.

Before *December 16:* Had discussion with sanatanists.

December 16: Arrived in Bezawda at 3 a.m.
Visited Padamata, Padamatalanka, Mogalrajapuram and Idupugallu.
At Bezwada visited Harijan quarters; addressed women's meeting, Andhra Harijan workers' meeting and public meeting.

December 17: At Mudunuru opened two temples to Harijans in morning.
At Gudivada, spoke at public meeting.
At Siddhantam opened temple to Harijans; gave interview to *The Hindu* in afternoon.
Visited Angaluru, Gudlavalleru, Kavutaram and Pedanna.
Reached Masulipatam; addressed public meeting.
Paid visit to Challapalle.

December 18: At Masulipatam; silence day.

December 19: In evening visited Kankipadu, Pamaru, and Bhatlapenumarru.
Returned to Bezwada.
Left for Madras.

December 20: Arrived in Madras in morning.

Spoke in reply to civic address; opened All-India Swadeshi Exhibition.

Addressed South India Chamber of Commerce, two women's meetings, students' meeting and public meeting.

December 21: Visited Harijan *cheries*.

At Robinson Park, Royapuram, spoke at Harijans' meeting.

At Perambur addressed M.S.M. Railway labourers' meeting and public meeting.

Spoke at Bharat Sabha at Vellala Teynampet.

At Wadia Park addressed Labour Union meeting and unveiled Annie Besant's portrait.

At Choolai spoke at public meeting.

December 22: Gave interview to S. Satyamurti.

Addressed public meeting, Vaishya Association and Gujarati, Marwari and Sindhi residents at Jain Mandir.

Unveiled portrait of Nageswara Rao Pantulu at Andhra Maha Sabha.

Visited slums in Triplicane.

Presided over Hindi Prachar Sabha Convocation.

Met Depressed Classes Deputation; gave interviews to *Madras Mail* and *The Hindu*.

Sent message to Tamil Lovers' Conference.

Left for Guntur.

December 23 : Reached Guntur in morning.

Paid visit to Konda Venkatappayya's ailing wife. Renamed a temple; addressed public meeting. Visited Chebrole, Munipalle, Manchalla; Vellalur and Ponnur.

At Nidubrole, spoke at public meeting; declared open institution for adult education and library.

At Thalapalem, opened Free Ayurvedic Kuteeram and laid foundation-stone of Atma Vilas Ashram building; addressed Harijans' meeting.

At Kavur; laid foundation of Vinay Ashram building, opened temple to Harijans, addressed public meeting.

At Ithananagarampadu opened temple to Harijans.

Visited Bhattiprolu and Repalli.

Reached Tenali; spoke at public meeting.

December 24: Arrived at Samalkot at 10.40 a.m.

At Peddapuram, spoke at public meeting.

At Cocanada addressed women's meeting and public meeting.

Visited Gollapalem.

At Ramchandrapuram, visited Valmiki Ashram, addressed public meeting.
Reached Rajahmundry at 7.30 p.m., addressed public meeting.
Met Harijan leaders' deputation at night.
Spent night in launch.

December 25: Reached Sitanagaram in morning; silence day.

December 26: Visited Vangalpadu, opened Sitaramaswami temple, Sitanagaram Harijan Ashram and two temples of Ramalingeshwara and Kodandam.
Reached Tallapudi by steam launch.
Visited Malakapalli, Dharmavaram, and Nidadavole.
Arrived in Tanuku.

December 27: At Tanuku spoke at public meeting, visited Eletipadu, Kavitam, Poduru, Vedangi and Jinnunur.
At Palakollu, spoke at public meeting, laid foundation of Harijan Ashram.
Paid visit to Ballipadu.
Addressed public meetings at Bhimavaram and Tadepalligudem.
Reached Ellore at 5 p.m. and addressed public meeting and Arya Andhra Sangha, unveiled Lajpatrai's portrait; visited Harijan quarters.

December 28: Met Congress workers.
Left Ellore.
Reached Vizagapatam in afternoon.
Visited Harijan workers; opened swadeshi store; spoke at women's meeting and public meeting.
At Bimlipatam opened Ramamandiram.
At Vizianagaram met Harijan leaders.

December 29: At Vizianagaram visited Harijan quarters; spoke at public meeting.
At Anakapalle, spoke in reply to civic address.
Reached Bitragunta.

December 30: Addressed public meetings at Kavali and Allur.
At Gandavaram; opened temple to Harijans; spoke at public meeting.
Visited Yellayapalem.
At Buchireddipalem; addressed women's meeting and public meeting.
At Nellore; visited Harijan quarters, opened reading-room for Harijans; addressed women's meeting and public meeting.

At Gadur; spoke at public meeting.
Arrived in Venkatagiri.

December 31: Visited Harijan quarters; laid foundation stone of reading-room for Harijans; spoke at public meeting.
At Tirupati, addressed public meeting.
Visited Renigunta.
Reached Cuddapah.

January 1, 1934: At Cuddapah; silence day.

January 2: Had an interview with Harijan workers.
Opened Cuddapah Swadeshi Emporium.
Visited Harijan quarters; addressed public meeting.

January 3 : Reached Peddavadugur at 4.30 a.m.; addressed public meeting.
Visited Gooty.
At Guntakkal visited tannery and Harijan quarters; spoke at public meeting.
Visited Konakondla, Vajrakarur and Uravakonda.
At Anantapur, visited Harijan quarters, addressed public meeting.
Arrived in Hindupur.

Janurry 4: Left Hindupur.
Visited Goribidnur.
At Doddaballapur spoke at public meeting.
At Tumkur had talk with local workers; visited Harijan quarters; addressed public meeting.
Visited Tyamagondlu and Nelamangala.
Arrived in Bangalore at 4.45 p.m.; opened branch of All-India Spinners' Association; addressed women's meeting, public meeting and Marwaris' meeting; visited Harijan quarters.
Reached Mysore.

January 5: Visited Tagadur, Badanvall and Nanjangud.
At Mysore visited Harijan quarters; addressed Harijan workers' meeting, women's meeting and public meeting.

January 6: Visited Mandya, Sakoor, Maddur, Besagrahalli, Shivapuram, Somanhalli, Chennapatna, Closepet, Kankanhalli, Bidali and Kengeri.
Returned to Bangalore; addressed students' meeting.

January 7: At Bangalore, visited Narasimharaya Adi-Karnataka Hostel, Deena Seva-sangha, Adi-Karnataka Girls' Home and Harijan quarters.

Addressed Malleswaram women's meeting, co-operators' meeting at Apex Bank, Temperance Federation, women's meeting, public meeting and Harijan workers' meeting; spoke at civic reception.

January 8: At Bangalore; silence day.

January 9: Gave message to people of Mysore.
Left Bangalore.

January 10: Reached Olavakkote; visited Shabari Ashram.
At Palghat addressed public meeting and women's meeting.
Visited Chittur, Koduvayur, Thenkurissi and Veliyanchathanur.
At Kuzhalmannam addressed Nayadis' meeting.
Visited Karimpuzha, Cherpulasseri, Ananganadi, and Ottapalam.
Reached Guruvayur at 10 p.m.

January 11: At Guruvayur addressed public meeting.
Visited Kunnamkulam.
At Akikav laid foundation of free dispensary for Harijans.
At Pattambi spoke at public meeting.
Arrived in Cannanore.

January 12: At Payyanur; visited Shree Narayan Harijan Ashram, khadi depot; addressed public meeting.
Returned to Cannanore; spoke at Harijan workers' meeting and public meeting.
Reached Tellicherry.

January 13: At Tellicherry spoke at public meeting.
Addressed public meetings at Mahe and Badagara.
At Pakkanarpuram opened Balakrishna Memorial Ayurvedic Dispensary.
Visited Quilandy.
Arrived in Calicut.
Addressed women's meeting, public meeting and students' meeting; unveiled portraits of K. Madhavan Nair at Town Hall and *Mathrubhumi* office.

January 14: Visited Kalpetta; opened Harijan colony; spoke at public meeting, Harijan workers' meeting; visited Harijan quarters.

January 15: At Calicut; silence day.

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